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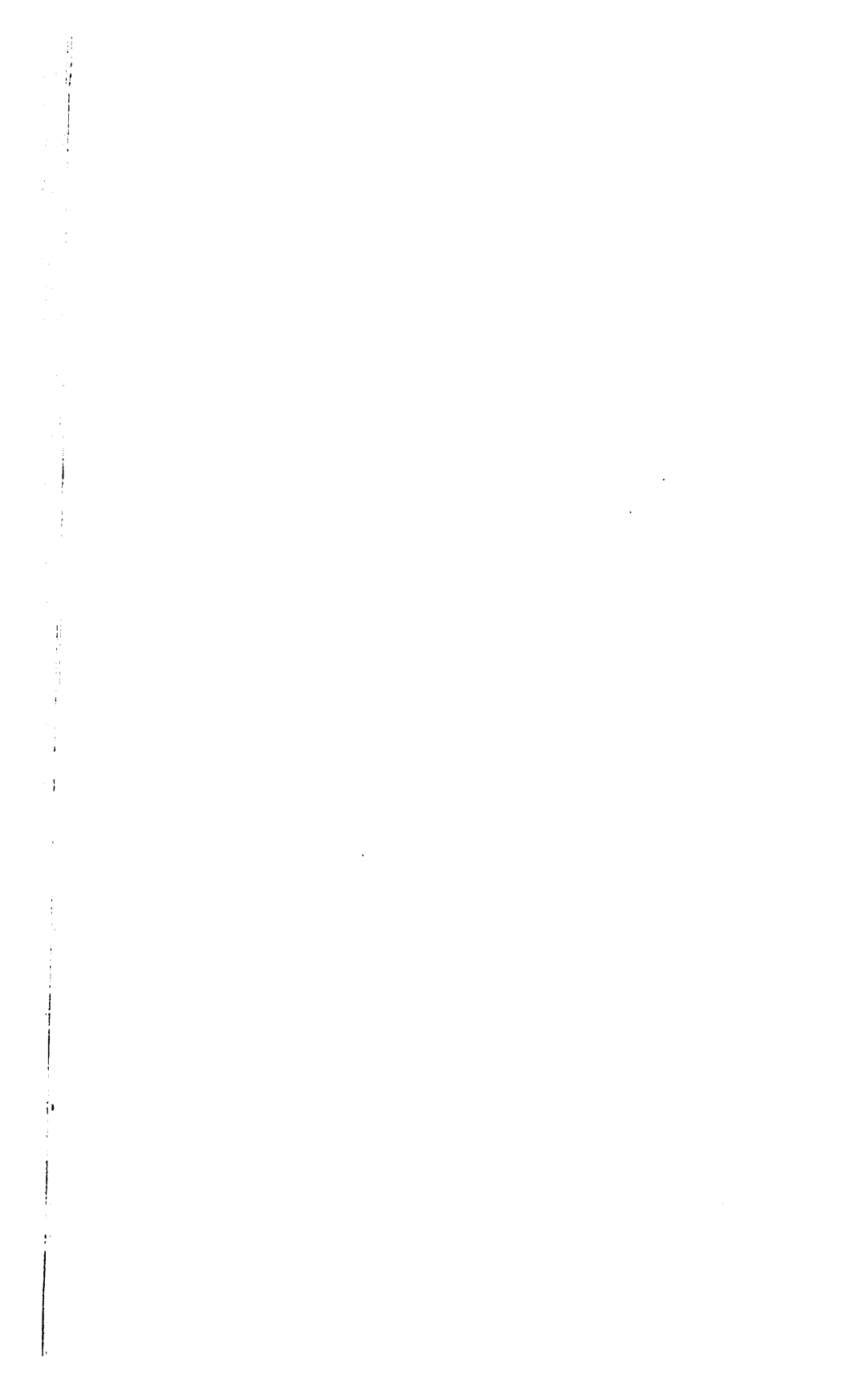
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PRIVATE MEMOIRS
OF THE
COURT OF LOUIS XVIII.
VOL. II.

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PRIVATE MEMOIRS

OF THE

COURT OF LOUIS XVIII,

BY A LADY.

E. L. Lamothe-Langon

VOL. II.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN AND RICHARD BENTLEY,

NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1830.



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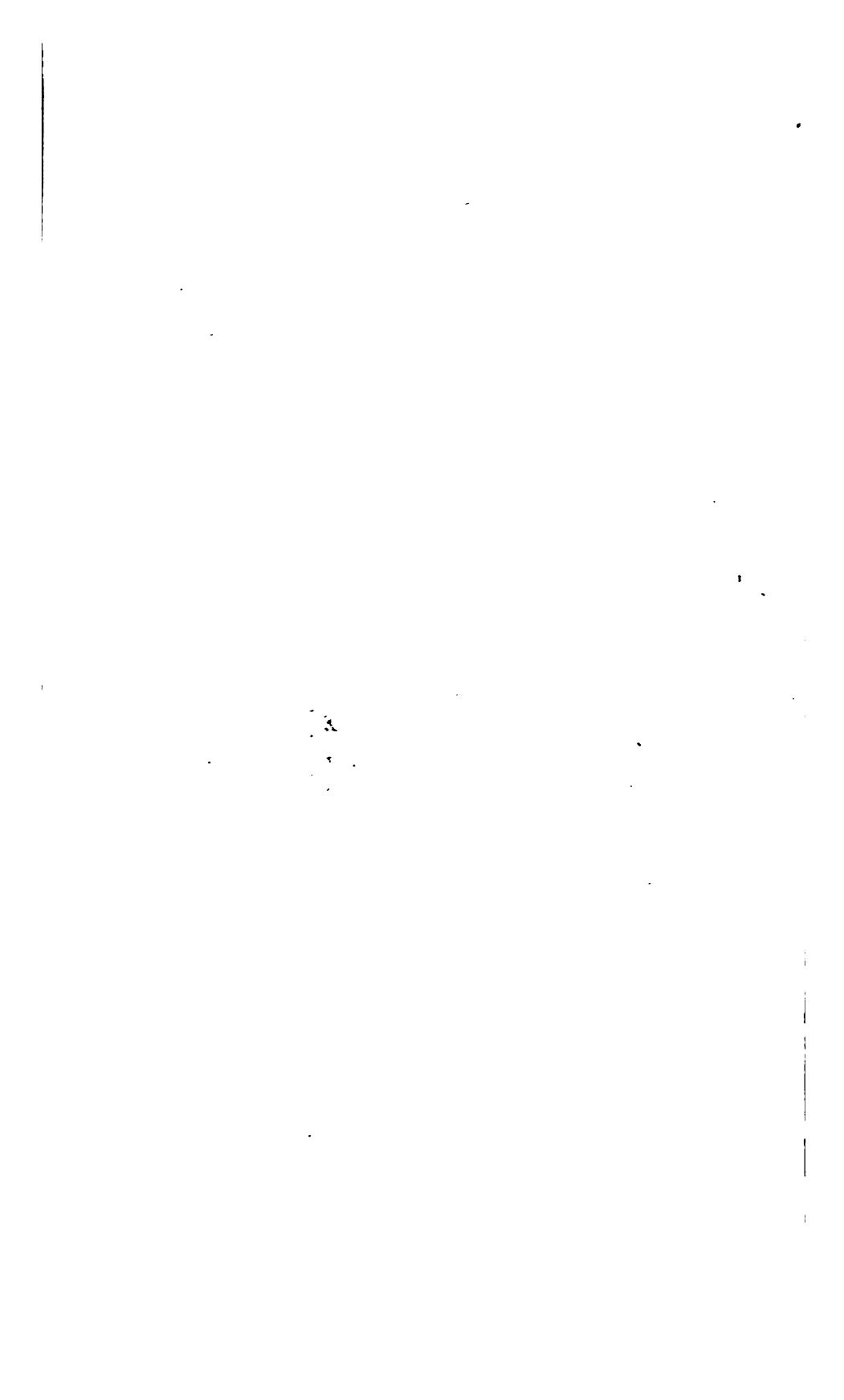
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MEMOIRS

OF THE

COURT OF LOUIS XVIII.

CHAPTER I.

Louis XVIII's opinion of Ferdinand VII.—The bishops who protested against the concordat in 1801.—The fête of Saint Louis in 1814.—Recollections.—Dinner at the Hôtel-de-Ville.—Lord Castlereagh in Paris.—Lord Wellington and the Countess Bl. . . .—The Congress of Vienna.

THE further we advanced the more the dissatisfaction of the faithful increased. It was affirmed that the new monarchy with the charter could not stand, and that the provinces, for *departments* were no longer spoken of, anxiously wished that the king should resume the absolute power that had belonged to his ancestors. Allusion was made to Ferdinand VII, who on his restoration exercised uncontrolled authority; and Ferdinand was proclaimed the greatest

monarch of the age. We at the Tuileries were perfectly sincere in our praises of Ferdinand. I say *we*, for at that period I was quite an absolutist. If I have now become a little more reasonable, I owe the change to the course of events and the good sense of the king. Louis XVIII was not however quite of our opinion respecting the King of Spain, and he said to me ;

“How can you regard Ferdinand VII as a great king? he could not keep his crown when he had it ; and when at Valençai he spent his time in attending mass and embroidering dresses for the Virgin Mary.”

“You forget,” said I to his majesty “the amusements which were occasionally transmitted to him from Paris.”

“He had the society of women of light character to be sure. It was considerate of Napoleon to provide him with the sort of company best suited to his taste. Libertine princes are usually superstitious and cruel ; and accordingly Ferdinand was no sooner restored to his throne, than he restored the Inquisition. This is the example which is quoted for a king who returns to his states with a charter securing the rights of his subjects.”

All that Louis XVIII could say was in vain ; we continued to harass him. We were however just getting tired of our useless importunities,

when our party received a strong reinforcement from England. I allude to the bishops who protested against the concordat of 1801. They would not tender their resignations, though those measures were certainly necessary to preserve the tranquillity of the church; and their obstinacy obtained for them the honours of persecution and even of martyrdom. The bishops who thus refused to resign were fourteen in number.

1. M. de La Fare, Bishop of Nancy, who unfortunately thought it a mark of cleverness to shew his decided hatred of new ideas. The Roman purple with which he has been invested since the restoration must in some measure have satisfied his ultramontane pretensions.

2. M. de Bovet, Bishop of Sisteron, a man of mild and peaceful disposition. Having been accustomed, during his exile to a life of perfect leisure, he refused, on his return, the bishopric of Toulouse, through the fear of undertaking duties for which his previous habits might have unfitted him.

3. M. de Villedieu, Bishop of Digne, the most gallant prelate in France; possessing considerable talent, but very little discretion.

4. M. de Bonnac, Bishop of Agen, a man so utterly insignificant that it would be difficult to say either good or ill of him.

5. M. de Flamarens, Bishop of Perigueux, an

old man who with very good intentions was unable to carry them into effect.

6. M. de Nicolai, Bishop of Beziers. He found on his return to France that his family had somewhat compromised themselves in the antechambers of Bonaparte. He constantly complained of this, and used to say with great *naïveté* that he bore his crosier with sorrow.

7. M. de Caux, Bishop of Ax, a native of Languedoc; a petulant and irritable but nevertheless a worthy man. He stuck fast to his mitre, which he would not have surrendered for gold or silver. His private virtues rendered him highly respectable.

8. M. Amelot, Bishop of Vannes, who was exceedingly anxious to get people to speak of him; but who unfortunately never could accomplish any thing he wished.

9. M. de Bethizy, Bishop of Uzès, was remarkable for that sort of obstinacy which is sometimes mistaken for energy. Having been a deputy of the National Assembly he fancied himself an eloquent orator and a great statesman. He could never perceive his own insignificance. On his return to France, he flattered himself that he should be placed at the helm of affairs; and, being disappointed, he returned to London in a rage. He expected that his departure would produce a great sensation; but

in this too he was disappointed ; and with the exception of the friends who wished him a pleasant journey, his absence was unnoticed by any one. Almost all the emigrants fell into the mistake of supposing that the restoration could not be consolidated without them. They thought their exile a sufficient claim to a place in the ministry.

10. M. de Thémînes, Bishop of Blois, was one of those who shewed themselves most perverse. His enemies said he was mad, but his friends wished to pass him off for a saint. He however possessed the virtues befitting his station.

11. M. du Chilleau, Bishop of Chalons-sur-Saône, a man of birth, talent, and great ambition. He took from the restored government whatever it gave him, and consoled himself with the hope of some time or other getting more.

12. M. de Varvilhes, Bishop of Gap, was said to be a man of talent and information. Though a bishop and an emigrant, he was reasonable and wished to see France at peace. He practised what he preached ; but unfortunately he preached in the desert.

13. M. de Vintimille, Bishop of Carcassonne, possessed many estimable qualities and the virtues suited to his office.

14. M. de Coucy, Bishop of Rochelle. He was a member of an illustrious family and his manners were those of a nobleman of the old court. He wished to get a place in the ministry, and as there appeared no disposition to give him one, he declared that religion was lost.

Such were the fourteen refractory bishops. They returned to France expecting by their presence to overwhelm with shame their brethren of the imperial government, especially those who had usurped their sees. But they were disappointed, and obliged to relinquish the hopes which they had nursed in their exile. In their ill-humour they complained of the misfortunes of the church, and offered up prayers for a happier future. Their discontent was now added to that of the court party. There was nothing but sighing and complaining;—a concert of lamentation and gnashing of teeth.

At length came the fête of St. Louis, a day that had not been kept in France for an age. On this occasion it was celebrated with heart-felt enthusiasm, and the fête of the monarch was really the festival of France. The Parisians are so much the creatures of habit, that they had never been entirely weaned of their St. Louis, and they hailed its return as a happiness they had long hankered after. A concourse of people assembled at the Tuileries. Nothing was heard

but joyous acclamations and cries of *vive le roi!* Now popular enthusiasm was at its height. I was not the last to present my homage to Louis XVIII. His majesty was deeply affected.

"Ah!" said he to me, "how often has the return of this day wrung tears from my eyes during my exile. The first time the festival of St. Louis was celebrated since I have been king was at Verona in 1795, after the death of my nephew, Louis XVII. The excellent d'Ava-ray was then living. He got up a sort of entertainment at which I assisted as king *incognito*. I was not happy. The Venetians made me pay dearly by their distrust for the asylum they had granted me, and which they soon forced me to forsake. The French republic was getting consolidated; the present was gloomy, and the future promised nothing more cheering. The St. Louis' days, that were subsequently celebrated at Blankenburg and Mittau and in England, found me no happier. It was not until last year at Hartwell that a ray of hope dawned upon me; and now, here I am. On such a day as this I feel happy in being in the abode of my ancestors. Yet it is full of sad recollections. There are persons absent....."

Renewed cries of *vive le roi* interrupted his majesty. I pressed his hand.

"A truce to regrets, Sire," exclaimed I; "this is a happy day and we shall long continue to celebrate it at the Tuileries, and what is better still at Versailles, where you will be more a monarch than here."

In so saying I expressed the sentiments of the royalists, who wished the king to quit Paris and to shut himself up in the palace of Versailles. There they imagined sovereignty would be better respected than in a vast city where it came into too close contact with the populace. But Louis XVIII was of a different opinion. I have already mentioned that he had shrunk from the ceremony of the re-installation of the court in the palace of Louis XIV. His answer to my observation respecting his residence at Versailles proved that he had politic reasons for fixing his abode at the Tuileries.

"Silly creature that you are," said he (for in this good-humoured way he often addressed me) "do you know what you are talking of? It is absolutely necessary that I should remain in my capital. In former times it was different; people then beheld the monarchy only where the monarch was present; and consequently the latter might, without compromising himself, go wheresoever he thought fit. His power accompanied him every where. But it is no longer so. The people have unfortunately seen that they

may have a government without a king. The chambers, the courts of justice, the police would suffice for them. If by a bold stroke they should get possession of the Tuileries and seize the telegraph, I might call out from Versailles that I am king; but who would listen to me. I should be merely Count de Lille as I was before."

The festival of St. Louis was prolonged. The hostages of Louis XVI were ~~and~~ figuring in the entertainments. These hostages were the individuals who had offered themselves to be responsible for his royal person at the time of his arrest at Varennes. Their devotedness, as every one knows, was unavailing. They emigrated; and on their return experienced a favourable reception, but that was all. I believe, however, that Louis XVIII made each of them a present of a beautiful copy of the will of Louis XVI. But I have only a faint recollection of the circumstance and cannot speak of it with any certainty.

On the 30th of August, the municipality of Paris invited Louis XVIII to an entertainment at the Hôtel-de-Ville, in honour of the festival of St. Louis. The king accepted the invitation and the Prefect of the Seine requested that the royal cooks might be sent. "No, Sir," replied Louis XVIII, "I should wish every thing to be done by your people. I shall bring nothing with me but a good appetite." This urbanity, which

was perfectly Bourbonian, was a striking contrast to the distrust usually evinced by Bonaparte.

At this period I saw Lord Castlereagh for the first time. A combination of singularly fortunate circumstances had procured for him the reputation of a man of high talent. However, it would be unjust to deny his claim to a considerable degree of shrewdness and ability, and I readily admit that next to MM. Talleyrand, Metternich and some others, Lord Castlereagh was the first diplomatist in Europe. While we in France employed sentiment in the management of our political affairs, Lord Castlereagh in England employed money, which is a much surer instrument. He possessed solid sense and ready intelligence, without any good quality of heart or loftiness of mind. The manner of his death is generally known.

The first day I saw him I conceived a mortal dislike to him as well as to his countryman the Duke of Wellington. But all the ladies of the French court were not equally hard to please, and the hero of Toulouse found many susceptible hearts. On this subject I may relate a little anecdote.

The Countess de Bl.... no sooner saw Lord Wellington than she fell deeply in love with him. His half eagle-like, half sheepish countenance completely captivated her. The lady's royalist sentiments might certainly have some share in this

enthusiasm ; but, be this as it may, the poor countess was in love. When in company with the duke she sighed and assumed all sorts of languishing airs. She no doubt thought it a very fine thing to have a hero for a lover. At length a rendezvous was solicited and granted ; but its result did not appear to convince the lady that the duke was quite as amiable and gallant as he was reported to be. She was greatly enraged, and she spoke of the duke in the most contemptuous terms. There are some things which a woman can never pardon ; when the countess heard that the duke had received the bâton of a French Marshal, she said that he deserved a cudgel rather than a bâton. Only those who witnessed the state of things in France in 1814 and 1815 can form an idea of the extravagant political fanaticism which then prevailed, and which in several instances was converted into love. The above story I had from my friend the Viscountess de Vau . . . who was exceedingly intimate with the Countess de Bl . . . I communicated it to the king, who was much amused by it.

Meanwhile great interests were about to be discussed at Vienna, where the high powers were to meet to divide the little states of Europe among themselves.

Prince Talleyrand was appointed to represent the court of France at the Congress of Vienna.

A better choice could not have been made. Besides the indisputable talents which that statesman possesses, he entertains as good an opinion of himself as others entertain of him ; and this quality in itself often secures success. It is certain that his presence at the Congress was highly useful to the Bourbons ; had he not declared himself as vehemently as he did, the coalition would have been tardy in their proceedings and perhaps would have espoused the cause of Maria Louisa. Prince Talleyrand did not go willingly to the Congress ; he knew that he had numerous enemies, who would not fail to do every thing in their power to injure him in his absence. " You will see," said he to me, " that on my return I shall find myself robbed of the presidency and my post in the ministry." Prince Talleyrand is sometimes a true prophet.

CHAPTER II.

Ducis the poet.—Ducis the painter.—Count Jules de Polignac appointed ambassador.—Journey of Monsieur.—The Duke of Orleans.—The Duchess of Orleans.—My brother.

AT this period Ducis the poet was presented to his majesty. Ducis, was no less than La Fontaine entitled to the appellation of *bon homme*,

and he wrote tragedies like Corneille with the exception of his dedications. As I have already observed, neither Ducis nor Delille had ever crouched to the power of Napoleon. Ducis even refused the cross of the legion of honour, which the emperor offered him; he subsequently accepted it from the king, who presented it as the reward of his talent rather than his loyalty. Louis XVIII received Ducis with a complimentary quotation from *Œdipe*: the French Shakespeare was overcome by this mark of amiability, and from that moment the generous heart of the venerable poet was devoted to the Bourbons. No one knew better than the king how to conciliate the good graces of literary men.

Ducis has a nephew of the same name as himself, who is one of our cleverest artists. I am an enthusiastic admirer of M. Ducis' style of painting and I prefer his little pictures to works of greater magnitude and pretension. How often have I gazed with admiration on Tasso reading his Jerusalem to the beautiful Eleonora d'Este, and sighed while I looked at poor Mary Stuart, singing her last romance with the lover of her heart. Ducis is happy in the choice of his subjects, and portrays most successfully the romance of history. As a painter of cabinet pictures he is on a level with M. Pierre Guerin in the historical department. His style may perhaps be re-

proached with some small degree of affectation : but he pleases and captivates :—what more is necessary?

The new court unfortunately bestowed but little attention on poets and painters. Intrigue was preferred to the fine arts.

The intelligence of the death of Caroline Queen of Naples was received with great indifference. No thought was yet entertained of strengthening the bonds of relationship with the kingdom of the two Sicilies.

At this time Monsieur set out on a journey to Provence and Lower-Languedoc, and the Duke of Berri visited Alsace. The inhabitants of the North and South of France eagerly wished to see our princes. Monsieur gained great popularity in the South, where his talent and graceful manners were universally admired. At fifty he was pronounced to be what he was at twenty, the most accomplished gentleman in France. His journey would no doubt have been attended by the happiest results, had not the folly of the ultras deranged every thing.

On the 7th or 8th of October, another prince of the royal family arrived in Paris : this was the Duke of Orleans. He, like the rest, had suffered the greatest misfortunes, and had courageously struggled with adversity. After having gloriously fought in the French ranks, he retired into peace-

ful obscurity. Turning to account the talents he had cultivated in happier times, he gave lessons with as much patience and humility as though he had been born to no higher a destiny. When afterwards restored to the rank which his illustrious birth entitled him to fill, his conduct was marked by the most perfect moderation and dignity. His noble sentiments, joined to the simplicity of his manners, overcame repugnances and obliterated the recollection of some past events, which the duke had not entirely the power to control. Though economical in his expenditure, he is a liberal patron of the arts and artists, and he is fond of collecting around him all objects of national glory. He is an excellent son, an affectionate husband and a kind father, and, as he is anxious to be a faithful subject, he never professed more than a sort of half opposition. Louis XVIII, whatever may have been said to the contrary, acknowledged in 1815 how false were the prejudices which alarmists and mischief-makers had excited against his royal highness.

The Duke of Orleans did not return alone: he brought with him his illustrious sister, who inherited all her mother's virtues, and who might have lived in unnoticed retirement as she wished, had she been more sparing of her good deeds. The duke was also accompanied by his wife, the noble daughter of a monarch, whose merit is equal

to her exalted birth. She brought with her the first fruits of a happy marriage;—two young princes, then the dearest hope of the royal family of France.

My brother, (I beg the reader will forgive this sudden transition) is an exceedingly eccentric man. He has travelled so much that he seems to think himself a citizen of every country in the world; which is much the same as having no country. He came to France in 1815 and he thought he had helped to conquer it. Though a young man he entertains antiquated ideas, and he belongs to the old *régime*. He has been a favourite with the ladies and yet he entertains the worst possible opinion of the whole sex. Indeed, he does not think much better of men. He is convinced that there is not a true friend among them, and therefore he will be the friend of no one. He possesses an excellent heart, but he is an egotist by system.

These eccentricities are a source of never-ending quarrels between us. I am constantly endeavouring to convince him that he is wrong, while he persists in proving to me that he is right. The same scene is renewed day after day; I really believe that in the end he will bring me round to all his notions, except to be sure his bad opinion of women.

CHAPTER III.

M. de Pradt's disappointment and ill-humour.—His departure for Auvergne.—His visit to Madame de Blacas.—The Abbé della Genga's arrival in Paris.—His high favour at court.—His illness.—Sister Martha.—A pamphlet by M. de Chateaubriand.—Protest against the charter.—General Vandamme.—His visit to the Tuileries.—The king at the Odeon.—Conspiracy of the 30th of November.—A few words more respecting M. de Blacas.—Marshal Soult, war minister.—The Duke de Coigny.—The Marquis de Viomenil.—The Duke de Richelieu.

M. DE PRADT, grand chancellor of the legion of honour, and formerly Archbishop of Malines, suddenly quitted Paris, and having nothing better to do, retired to philosophize on his estate in Auvergne. The cause of M. de Pradt's abrupt departure was as follows: he requested, as the reward of his immense services, to be sent to the Congress of Vienna. The preference was given to Prince Talleyrand, at which M. de Pradt was furiously indignant. "One cannot move a step," said he, in a most comical fit of rage, "without meeting that ungowned priest. I only wish I were a bishop again, and that I might catch him in my diocese, I would excommunicate him in good style." I do not know whether this threat greatly alarmed the Prince of Benevento,

but it certainly had no effect in promoting the views of M. de Pradt. By way of consolation, the disappointed bishop had recourse to his pen, and he very speedily presented to the world two important works. The first was a history of his embassy to Poland, a work full of fancy, and originality, in which three things are proved :— 1st. that Napoleon was a contemptible monarch ; 2nd. that M. de Bignon, who preceded M. de Pradt as Polish Ambassador, was a fool ; and 3rd. that M. de Pradt himself was the greatest diplomatist of the age. His second publication was a history of the restoration, in which it was proved that that event was entirely the work of the Archbishop of Malines ; that he alone had conceived the plan and carried it into execution. In spite of this book, which so clearly developed M. de Pradt's services to his country, a new disgrace assailed him. He was dismissed from the superintendence of the military school of Saint-Cyr. At this last stroke his rage exceeded all bounds. He resolved to take revenge, and he did take it. He had placed the Bourbons on the throne ; he had kept them on it by his powerful protection. He now withdrew from them his support, and consigning them to their unfortunate fate, set off for Auvergne, like Achilles retiring to vent his ill-humour in his tent. Louis XVIII was not very deeply afflicted at the de-

parture of the abbé; he allowed him to retain the title of grand chancellor of the legion of honour; of which he was not deprived until after the hundred days.

I saw M. de Pradt on the evening previous to his departure, at the residence of Madame de Blacas, to whom he went to pay a farewell visit. I was never in my life better entertained. The abbé is always highly amusing, and it is easy to judge what he was on the evening to which I allude, when his anger rendered him irresistibly comical. His *bon-mots*, bitter pleasantries, and, I may add, his buffooneries — made us almost die of laughter. He complained, he stormed, he argued, he predicted in the most extraordinary way imaginable. If at that time I had entertained any idea of writing these Memoirs, I should on my return home have noted down the abbé's conversation. It would certainly have been the most amusing chapter of my book. "Ah! Monseigneur," said I, "who would not be treated with the blackest ingratitude, and suffer all sorts of vexation and injustice, if they could complain of their misfortunes as eloquently as you have done for the last two hours!"

"You may laugh, Madam," said he, "if you please; but I can tell you that you and your friends will not probably laugh long. Those

who are driving me away will regret me within six months, and will recall me within a year; they cannot do without me. I combine in myself the old and the new *régimes*. I have seen the errors of the past, I understand the wants of the present, and I foresee the chances of the future." — Alas! the prophet did not foresee that before six months were at an end, he would be performing mass on the Champ de Mars, and blessing the imperial eagles before they winged their flight to the plains of Waterloo, and that by this shameful defection, he would fully justify what he then termed black ingratitude!

We thus lost M. de Pradt, but we were compensated by the arrival of a no less celebrated abbé: this was Monsignore della Genga, who afterwards became a cardinal, and was ultimately raised to the papal chair, under the title of Leo XII. Monsignore was a man of exceedingly prepossessing appearance: his features were regular and pleasing, and his manners dignified and easy; in short, he was remarkable even in Italy, for intrigue and gallantry. He courted the good graces of the fair sex, with whom he was a great favourite, especially during his visit to Bavaria, whither he was sent as apostolic nuncio. In that country he became intimately connected

with a lady, distinguished for beauty and talent: the Countess Cr——n. The King of Bavaria, when he heard of his elevation to St. Peter's chair, exclaimed in the presence of many persons of the court; "Ah! Monsignore della Genga is Pope! so much the better for the Countess Cr——n's children!"

The legate came to Paris to congratulate Louis XVIII on his return to his dominions. His cheerful and social manners made him much liked at the French court; and in a country in which nobody can be said to be loved, he inspired a friendly feeling in every one to whom he was introduced. This was strikingly exemplified by the interest which was evinced for him, during a fit of illness with which he was attacked. For several days his life was despaired of, and the anticipation of his dying thus prematurely, and in a foreign country, was a source of universal regret. But he recovered: fate had ordained that he should fill St. Peter's chair, and die in the Palace of the Vatican, and that his ashes should repose amidst the splendid tombs of the Sistine Chapel. I little dreamed of all this when I saw Monsignore della Genga fluttering about me so gaily and airily, and I believe he had then as little idea of it himself. He was not a Sixtus the Fifth, assuming the appearance of old

age, and gloomily hobbling on crutches to the papal authority. Della Genga was one of my most assiduous courtiers.

It was, I believe about this time that Sister Martha came to Paris. Who has not heard of Sister Martha, that benevolent nun, whose charity may be compared with that of St. Vincent de Paul—who did so much good with such slender means, and whose name is blessed in all parts of Europe? During the war of the invasion, Sister Martha visited the field of battle and the hospitals, and administered assistance to the wounded of all nations; thus verifying the sublime words which she had chosen for her device:—"The unfortunate are my friends." Sister Martha had seen the Count d'Artois in Paris, and had been received by that prince with the most marked kindness. Her wish to see Louis XVIII, induced her to quit Besançon and repair to Paris; and one Sunday morning, about ten o'clock, she was seen in the hall of the marshals, dressed in her stuff gown, black serge apron, and flat crowned cap. She uttered not a word. Every body's eyes were fixed upon her, and had it not been for the eight or ten crosses and medals, with which she had been decorated by various sovereigns, and which she wore on her bosom, the venerable nun would

probably have incurred the ridicule of some of the gay courtiers : but of course it was impossible to shew any thing like disrespect to a person who wore so many cordons. The ushers announced the king, and his majesty's retinue advanced. The Count d'Artois, who entered first, according to custom, glanced his eyes round the hall. He perceived Sister Martha, whom he immediately recognised and stepping up to her, he took her by the hand, saying : " Ah ! sister, are you here ? I am happy to see you. You always look fresh and hearty ; benevolence and virtue are good for the health."

" That cannot be doubted, Prince," replied Martha with a readiness that would have done honour to the most adroit courtier, " by those who have the happiness to see your Royal Highness look so well."

The prince conducted poor Martha to the king. " Brother," said he, " allow me to present to you the most virtuous nun in your dominions." Sister Martha threw herself at his majesty's feet.

" Sire," said she, " I have prayed for the happiness of seeing you. Heaven has heard my prayer, and I shall now die content."

" Be it so, Sister," replied Louis XVIII, " die content ; but first live long and happy, as you deserve to do."

This little scene took place in the presence of the great officers of the court and a throng of marshals and ambassadors, who were accompanying the king to mass. All were deeply moved. Never did humble charity receive so touching a tribute beneath the gilded roof of a palace.

The month of November 1814 was fertile in events, among which I must include M. Carnot's reply to the Viscount de Chateaubriand. It was entitled: "Political Reflections on several Pamphlets of the day, and on the Interests of all Frenchmen." The object of this eloquent production was to preach concord, oblivion of the past, and the union of all parties. Never were generous sentiments developed with greater talent.

While the author of the Political Reflections was seeking to consolidate the new monarchy by words of peace and conciliation, several dukes and peers, together with some members of the old parliament of Paris, drew up a new protest against the charter, the representative government, the new civil and criminal laws, and in short against all the advantages that France had gained by her enormous sacrifices. A mischievous report was circulated that the princes of the blood, those who stood on the highest steps of the throne, had affixed their signatures to this protest. The report had a most alarming effect

on the public mind. Such was the emotion which it excited, that the royal government found it necessary to deny officially in all the journals the existence of the protest.

In spite of this denial I had seen the original document; I had had it in my hands, and had read it. I could quote almost all the names affixed to it; but I shall abstain from so doing, because I do not wish to compromise men who, after all, might have been actuated by good intentions.

However, the denial of the protest had not the effect of tranquillizing the public mind. The parties which had been momentarily confounded by the great events of 1814 now rose up again, became disciplined and distinctly separated, and viewed each other with a threatening aspect. The Bonapartists, who had not rallied round the throne, and the jacobins, a turbulent set who will never rally round any regular government, resumed courage and sought to intimidate others. They claimed the right of sharing every thing with the royalists; but this was only a first step towards the invasion of every thing. To form an idea of the incredible audacity of these people I may relate a trait of General Vandamme, who, was then considered one of their principal leaders.

Unfortunately the field of battle was not the

only place in which General Vandamme had shewn himself formidable. As an old republican, he viewed the emigrants with a sort of horror. It may be easily guessed how he was regarded at court, and he was himself perfectly aware of the sentiments entertained towards him. However, shortly after his return from Russia, where he had been a prisoner since the campaign of 1813, he requested to be presented to the king. This was decidedly refused.

The general was perfectly astonished that his majesty should take the liberty of closing his door against him ; but he was not disconcerted and he adopted a very cavalier-like mode of obtaining the wished-for audience. One Sunday morning, before the hour of mass, dressed in full uniform, with his plume in his hat and his sabre by his side, he ascended the steps of the palace, passed through the guard-hall, and as nobody ventured to arrest his progress, he penetrated to the very ante-chamber of the king's apartment. Here he stopped and sent in the usher of the chamber to inform his majesty that General Vandamme wished to speak with him.

The king was just preparing to go to chapel.

The Prince de Poix, who, I believe, was on duty that day, on learning what had taken place entered, full of consternation, to communicate the matter to his majesty. All the persons in

attendance manifested the utmost indignation ; but the king replied with the most perfect calmness : “ Let the usher inform M. de Vandamme that I cannot receive him to-day.” The message was delivered, and the general had no alternative, but to withdraw. His person was described to the body-guards, who received instructions not to allow him to pass if he should again present himself, which, however, he did not. This circumstance, which, at the time, caused us a good deal of irritation, was after all nothing but the mad freak of a man who wished to take an extraordinary mode of justifying himself against the calumnies of which he supposed he was the object. But an event of a much more serious nature overwhelmed us with consternation and alarm, and filled our minds with the most gloomy presentiments.

It was now the end of the month of November. It had been announced that his majesty with his family and the princes of the house of Orleans were to honour the Odeon theatre with their presence. The evening was fixed for this visit, when suddenly a report was circulated in the Tuileries, from the Tuileries to the Palais Royal, and from thence through all Paris, that a plot had been formed for carrying off the king and his family. In the morning the posts were doubled and orders were dispatched for all the troops in the

barracks to hold themselves under arms. The police exerted all its activity, and the ministers were roused from the imprudent security into which they had suffered themselves to be lulled. An extraordinary council met in the morning at the palace, and it was proposed that the king should not visit the Odeon that evening. His majesty, however, would not listen to this suggestion. He went to the theatre; he knew he had nothing to fear for the plot was defeated.

Attempts have been made to throw a doubt on the existence of this plot. It was pretended that the government was panic-struck; but there was good reason for alarm. On this subject I am enabled to give the most accurate information, for I took some part in the affair, and I had the happiness to be serviceable to the royal family.

A young man, named Borger, applied to the Prince de Poix to be admitted into the body guard: the prince refused him on the ground that he did not belong to a noble family. Now it was very well known that it was usual to admit into the corps any one who might present himself, whether noble or plebeian. Young Borger was therefore piqued at finding himself treated worse than others, and he loudly vented his indignation against the government.

One of his friends, who had been an officer in the imperial guard, observing his dissatisfied state

of mind, invited him to join an association which would afford him the means of revenging himself. He consented. At first the object of the enterprise was only vaguely hinted at; but his companions soon became more communicative and informed him that their intention was to seize the royal family, and to proclaim the republic, with three presidents for life, who were to be MM. Lafayette, Gohier, and Carnot. But this was a mere idle story got up to divert such young conspirators who were liberty-mad; the real project, which was known only to a select number of adepts, was to replace Bonaparte on the throne, and to require him to establish liberal institutions as the condition of his restoration. Meanwhile, the visit of the king and princes to the Odeon was announced; and the conspirators determined to take that opportunity of attempting the execution of their plot.

Young Borger became alarmed; yet he was reluctant to betray his accomplices. He dreaded either to speak or to remain silent. The fatal day approached. He regularly spent his evenings in company with a young woman named Derval, to whom he was attached. The girl observed the gloomy and thoughtful air of her lover. She questioned him closely and he confessed to her the whole affair; but no sooner was she made acquainted with the fatal secret, than she became

more uneasy than the conspirator himself. However, she determined on communicating the whole to M. de Marignié, with whom she was acquainted, and in whom she reposed great confidence. This M. de Marignié, who was inspector of studies at the Academy of Paris was a sort of literary man, and the most ardent royalist in all France. His love for the Bourbons amounted to absolute idolatry. I used to see him frequently, and his enthusiasm appeared to me so extravagant that I could not think it sincere. I was inclined to suspect that the worthy inspector of studies was playing the hypocrite.

No sooner was Marignié informed of the plot than he hastened to communicate it to me, and begged that I would procure him an audience of the king. "My dear Sir," said I, "it appears to me more proper that his majesty should receive M. Borger; for you only know the business at second hand." This remark did not please him. He complained bitterly of my not giving him, as I could have done, an opportunity of proving his zeal in the eyes of the king. I let him complain as much as he pleased, and I told him that before any thing could be done he must bring M. Borger to me. He was forced to consent to this. I found M. Borger a young man of quiet inoffensive disposition but not overburthened with understanding.

He related to me the details of the odious plot with a degree of coolness and consistency which deeply distressed me, because it left no room to doubt the truth of what he said. I desired both him and Marignié to be under no alarm, and I instantly repaired to the Tuileries. It was, I think, the 28th of November, the day preceding that fixed for the king's visit to the Odeon. I told his majesty all I had heard; and he informed me, that three days previously the police had received intimation of the plot, that the conspirators were on the point of being arrested, and that every measure had been taken to frustrate their criminal enterprize. The police had not however received such correct information as that which I had obtained. The king, to whom I mentioned the embarrassing situation of M. Borger, directed me to assure him that his name should never be mentioned in the business. But M. Marignié, eager to make himself appear of importance, went from place to place repeating all he knew and loudly proclaiming the name of M. Borger. This preyed upon the young man's mind, and a few mornings afterwards he was found dead in his bed. Whether he died by his own hand, or was murdered by the villains whom he had denounced, was a mystery which I could never clear up.

This plot excited great uneasiness in the mind of Louis XVIII. He could not divest himself of the conviction that audacious enemies were secretly endeavouring to overthrow the legitimate throne, which had been so recently restored. He was not wrong. A strong feeling of dissatisfaction prevailed. The military in particular could not accommodate themselves to the pacific royal government. After lording it, as they had done, both abroad and at home for the space of fifteen years, they were not now inclined to become submissive subjects, and they hankered after Bonaparte's recall.

In such precarious circumstances, a vigilant, and above all, a vigorous administration was necessary to ensure the safety of the monarchy; yet, never was the destiny of a state entrusted to more feeble and unskilful hands. M. de Blacas was, I confidently affirm, the most incompetent of ministers. To avert dangers he thought it sufficient to despise them. In his sublime arrogance he readily imagined that revolutionists would never dare to conspire while he was minister. If any apprehensions were expressed respecting the future, he smiled; if it was insisted that there was good cause for alarm, he shrugged his shoulders; if the plots of the Bonapartists were denounced to him, he turned on his heel and went off observ-

ing that “ no good royalist would repeat such nonsense ; but that we might rest secure—*dormir sur les deux oreilles.*” This was his favourite phrase and yet a bold stroke overthrew the restoration on the 20th of March.

The king momentarily shook off the influence which M. de Blacas exercised over him. He withdrew the portfolio of the war department from General Dupont, and by this means got rid of one of the principal political nullities by whom he was surrounded.

General Dupont was succeeded by Marshal Soult, Duke of Dalmatia, who came into office crowned by the glory he had earned on twenty fields of battle. He had become a sincere royalist ; and he did not hate the old nobility as the rest of Bonaparte’s nobles did. He was respected by the army and he had secured the gratitude of the Vendéans, by proposing the erection of a monument to the victims of Quiberon. He possessed every qualification requisite for the office to which he was appointed, being a man of integrity, prudence, and active habits. The king could not have made a better choice ; yet it was disapproved by the court party, who wished the appointment to have been given to the old Duke de Coigny or the old Marquis de Vioménil. These two noblemen, who were justly esteemed for their loyalty and

elegant manners, would no doubt have been very competent to fill the office forty years earlier; but their time had gone by. Their feeble hands were not now to be entrusted with the reins of the war office, a department of the government by no means easy to be managed. The king consoled them by promising to each the baton of Marshal of France which was accordingly presented to them some time afterwards.

The court party had another protégé whom they wished to bring into office: viz. the Duke de Richelieu; this wish was not so very unreasonable. The duke had brought with him from Russia the reputation of a great statesman. The Emperor Alexander appointed him Governor of the Crimea, and it was alleged that his high talent had enabled him to civilize that barbarous province. As to talent, the Duke de Richelieu might have shewn as much in France as he did in the Crimea: the fact is, he was nothing extraordinary. New and grand ideas, firmness, and foresight, were not to be expected of him; but he possessed prudence, moderation, a conciliatory disposition, and above all a stock of good sense; in short he might be called a superior man in his mediocrity. The qualities for which he was most to be admired were chivalrous loyalty and soundness of principle. The diplomatists of Europe oftener than once yielded

to the influence of these noble qualities, for which they themselves were not very remarkable. It is certain, that the esteem with which the Emperor Alexander honoured him powerfully contributed to the liberation of the French territory in 1817.

In society nobody could be more agreeable than the Duke de Richelieu. He possessed a handsome person, a dignified deportment, and the most captivating manners. In the most polished circle he was always as much distinguished for elegance, as a nobleman would be amidst a party of citizens. He lived in a style of magnificence; he was a liberal patron of the fine arts, and when he was minister he appropriated part of the public money to their encouragement.

To these remarks on M. de Richelieu I may add, that no one possessed in a higher degree, the esteem and confidence of Louis XVIII. His premature death was a source of constant regret to the king, who in cases of difficulty used frequently to exclaim: "Ah! if I had the Duke de Richelieu now."

CHAPTER IV.

Conversation with Louis XVIII respecting Fouché.—Portrait of Fouché.—He seduces the ultras. — The conspiracy. — Count Ferrand.—Bon-mots of M. de Fontanes and the Abbé de Feletz.—Baron de Vincent. — Count de Bruges.—The Marquis d'Ecquevilly.—Marshal Macdonald.—Count Lacépède.—The 1st. of January 1814.—Count Boissy d'Anglas. —The Abbé Rocher.

I WISH all the portraits I have to trace resembled that of the Duke de Richelieu. Though in my character of a memoir writer I am inclined to be indulgent, yet I shall find it difficult to be impartial, in speaking of the Duke of Otranto. His impenetrable stone mask always inspired me with fear. Yet I must confess there was a charm in his voice, and even in his looks ; but it was the fascination of a serpent. From the first moment of the restoration he strove to gain the confidence of Louis XVIII ; and he set forward, as a claim to that confidence, the harsh treatment he had latterly received from Napoleon.

One day the king said to me : “ I have seen the Duke of Otranto.”

“ Indeed! Sire,” I exclaimed in a tone of ill humour.

“ He is a man,” continued the king, “ who certainly has many faults; but during the empire he rendered signal services to the emigrants. He has oftener than once corresponded with me, and is very capable of advising. I am constantly hearing his praises; the whole faubourg Saint Germain is for him.”

“ You close my mouth. Henceforth I change my opinion respecting him; he is a saint, and will one day or other receive the honours of canonisation.”

“ Nay, a truce with jesting. He is actuated, I assure you, by the best intentions. I have been conversing with him for an hour: he has already seen my brother, and we are both well pleased with him.”

What answer could I make to this? I shrugged my shoulders, and we changed the subject of conversation, to which, however, we subsequently returned. Five or six days afterwards, the king said to me: “ I have seen the Duke of Otranto, again:* I have spoken to him about you, and your suspicion of the sincerity of his conversion.”

* Louis XVIII never called the duke Fouché; he seemed to dread pronouncing that name.

"I thought as much, Sire; for yesterday he called on me, in the hope of alluring me into his snares."

"What? has he called on you?"

"Yes, Sire, he came upon me like a thunder-bolt. I was so astonished that I scarcely knew where I was. I hardly remembered him, yet he alluded to what he was pleased to call our old friendship. At length he explained the object of his visit; he justified his conduct as well as he was able; he assured me of his repentance and of his great desire to serve you. Your Majesty may think as you please; but I have no faith in the sincerity of this good apostle."

The king persisted that I was unjust; that the worst people might reform. In short, I discovered that his majesty was under the influence of the spell, and I well knew that Fouché would seize the first opportunity of insinuating himself into the royal confidence. The result verified my anticipations. On the return of Napoleon, Fouché spared no pains to regain his favour, in case he should succeed, and in the event of his failure to impose again on the credulity of the royalists.

Fouché had too much experience of human nature not to foresee, at the very outset, the good use he might make of the ultras, whose vanity rendered them always ready to favour any one who would flatter them. The Duke of

Otranto flattered them, and from that moment a thousand voices were raised in behalf of *poor Monsieur Fouché*. He repented of his fault, and if he had treated many of the emigrants harshly, he had been serviceable to many others, and this entitled him to some indulgence. Besides, he was a man who might be useful to the monarchy. In short, at the Tuileries nobody swore by any thing but poor M. Fouché. Madame alone retained a well-founded feeling of dislike towards him.

The affair of the Odéon had left some distrust in the mind of the king. He saw that most of the men who had figured in France for the last twenty years were hostile to the royal cause and he thought it would be prudent to select one from among the men of the republic or the empire who would be able to keep a watchful eye upon his old colleagues. Hence, believing as he did in the Duke of Otranto's fidelity, he consulted him in 1814, and in 1815 appointed him minister of the general police.

It was easy to see that the jacobins and Bonapartists were plotting against the government. Their boldness daily increased; they had numerous meetings every where, and their ramifications extended from one end of the kingdom to the other: they even had command of the post-office, though the king had placed at the

head of it M. de Ferrand a man entirely devoted to his interest.

M. de Ferrand, who had formerly been a counsellor in the parliament of Paris, was distinguished for talent and for solid good qualities. He published a work entitled *l'Esprit de l'Histoire* which enjoys deserved reputation. His views were correct and his loyalty sincere though not extravagant: he would have shed his blood for the king; but he was as ignorant as the child unborn of all the duties of his office. He was known to be so conscientious and honourable that the conspirators did not hesitate to transmit their treasonable documents through his hands. I may here quote one of the thousand bon-mots attributed to M. de Talleyrand, who has also, in his way, written an *Esprit de l'Histoire*, during the republic, the empire, and the restoration. Poor M. de Ferrand had the honour to be pronounced the emblem of the monarchy when, having lost the use of his limbs, he attended the chamber of peers, the academy, &c. supported by two servants. M. de Talleyrand meeting him in this way on the staircase of the Luxembourg said, with that air of sympathy which the lame may be expected to feel for the paralytic: "Our poor colleague is the image of the government. He thinks he is walking and all the while he is carried." The real but secret head of the post-office was, how-

ever, Count de Lavalette, an active and enterprising man, devoted with heart and soul to Napoleon. His old hirelings were still in his service and through them he governed the post-office department.

With these elements of success there can be no doubt that, had the conspirators agreed among themselves, they might have carried every thing before them, but they were divided. Some were for a republic, others for a federal government on the model of the United-States of America: some wanted Napoleon, others a prince of the royal family. Amidst this conflict of opinions their chiefs knew not what to do. They every evening changed the master whom they had determined to choose on the succeeding day. M. de Fontanes, meeting M. de Montalivet at the house of their common friend count F...., said to him: "Well! my dear friend, whom are we to crown this week?" A few days after this I heard M. de Feletz say: "They are offering the sceptre to so many that at length it will remain in the hands of him who has it."

While all these plots were forming for the destruction of the royal family, the powers of Europe were taking the first step towards acknowledging the king's government by sending ambassadors. Austria alone kept back. This was a general subject of surprise, and owing to

the notorious obscurity of the proceedings of the cabinet of Vienna, some apprehension was entertained as to the cause of the negligence. At length, Baron Vincent arrived. He shewed his credentials and was accredited by Louis XVIII. We gave him a handsome reception. He had distinguished himself in the army, and he is a reasonable diplomatist. He has more knowledge of the world than of business, more adroitness than talent; at all events he gave satisfaction, and if he did no better, he certainly did no worse than another would have done.

In the month of December the king gave the direction of the police to M. d'André. I now perceive that, by an unpardonable error I have mentioned, that he received the appointment at the commencement of the restoration. It was Count Beugnot who, on the return of the king, was made director of the police, and to him, therefore, are due some of the reproaches which I have addressed to M. d'André, who, however, well deserved censure for the inability he manifested when M. Beugnot, by the death of M. Malouet became minister of the marine. He filled that post until the hundred days, when he disappeared and I know not what has become of him.

Candidates were not wanting for vacant places, nor even for places that were not vacant. The

Abbé de Pradt had not yet officially tendered his resignation, and intrigues were set on foot in every direction, for obtaining the post which the worthy abbé was to surrender. The old *régime* party favoured the Count de Bruges, a good sort of man, more praiseworthy perhaps for the qualities of his heart than of his head. He belonged to the household of Monsieur. M. d'Ecquevilly too had claims; and the Duke d'Aumont also aspired to the grand chancellorship.

But public suffrage called to that eminent post, either Vicomte de Chateaubriand or the Duke de Tarente. M. de Chateaubriand had the highest recommendation which a man of genius could possess, and in another career of glory Marshal Macdonald had earned unfading laurels. He had fought with courage, and commanded with talent: he possessed generosity and firmness of mind, and was the friend of justice and peace. On the return of the king he was one of the first to proclaim the necessity of a complete union between the two parties, and he took the oath of fidelity honestly, and without hesitation. The second restoration rendered him ample justice.

I know not why the grand chancellorship was taken from the Count de Lacépède, who filled the office during the empire. The count was the most learned courtier and the most courtier-

like scholar in the world, and in spite of his enormously tall stature, he always contrived to look little enough before the powers of the day. Knowing so well as he did the drudgeries of servility, he was wonderfully civil to all who sought favours of him. He was polite to a fault; his politeness was even a subject of ridicule, and ridicule is always a death-blow in France. I often saw the Count de Lacépède, and I always found his company very agreeable. He conversed gracefully and sometimes even ill-naturedly, when he was very far from intending it. He was amiable in all the relations of life; a faithful friend and a trustworthy man. As to his literary productions, it is not my province to judge of them. The public are acquainted with his continuation of Buffon and his *Histoire Générale*, which contains pages worthy of Bossuet.

The year 1814 was ended, and we entered upon that which was once more to put every thing at stake, and to expose France to the fatal chances of a new invasion. We had no thought of this on the 1st of January. We were confident in the present, and void of apprehension for the future. The king was in excellent spirits, and he presented me with several superb new-year's gifts.

Among the members of the Chamber of Peers, who were admitted on new year's day to pay

their respects to his majesty, Count Boissy d'Anglas obtained a marked degree of the royal attention. He was maître-d'hôtel to the king, then Monsieur, Count de Provence, when the revolution broke out. He adopted what was good in the new order of things, without participating in any of its excesses, and he might almost be regarded as a solitary instance of a man having passed uncorrupted through the vicissitudes of that eventful era. For simplicity and greatness of mind he might be compared to Socrates, and he braved death no less courageously than the Athenian philosopher. But fortunately the monsters who threatened to sacrifice him dared not perpetrate so odious a crime. When therefore his majesty saw Count Boissy d'Anglas on new year's day, he said: "I must reproach myself for not yet having complimented you on your firm and courageous conduct on the 1st prairial."

"I did my duty, Sire," replied the count; "your Majesty is very good to remember it."

"I and all France remember it, Count, and it will not be forgotten by history."

Another individual, who shared with Count Boissy d'Anglas the honour of being particularly noticed by his majesty on new year's day, was the Abbé Rocher, the king's confessor. I never

knew a priest better qualified to inspire respect. His piety was equally devoid of hypocrisy and ostentation ; and though he possessed considerable influence over the king's mind, he never in any way availed himself of it. He never meddled with state affairs, very properly conceiving that his office was to enlighten the piety of his royal penitent, and not to direct his political conduct. Consequently he never appeared at the Tuileries, except when sent for. He appeared at court on the first of January, but he kept in the back-ground until the king signified a wish that he should approach. The abbé having expressed the customary good wishes, the king said :—
“ Monsieur Rocher, your prayers will ensure my happiness during the year ;” then addressing himself to the persons about him, he observed, “ I have a confessor who is not a courtier. This is the first time I ever saw him out of the tribunal of penitence.” These words might have conveyed a lesson to many ecclesiastics, by whom they were heard.

CHAPTER V.

The congress of Vienna.—Death of the Princess of Leon.—Funeral of Mademoiselle Raucourt.—His majesty's remark on that occurrence.—M. de Chateaubriand.—Removal of the remains of Louis XVI to St. Denis.—Anecdote.—Trial of General Excelmans.—Death of General Quennel.—The last day of February.

IN spite of the good wishes of the courtiers, the year 1815 did not commence under happy auspices. The congress of Vienna presented the painful spectacle of an assemblage of sovereigns, who, while danger threatened, had made the first protestations of disinterestedness, but who, as soon as the danger was past, manifested the most disgraceful selfishness. The only question among them was who should appropriate the greatest share of spoil, and who should be the first to trample on the sacred rights of that legitimacy which they had proclaimed. Russia seized upon Poland, to the great grief of the heroic Poles; Saxony was mutilated by Prussian ambition; the electorate of Hanover became a kingdom at the expense of its neighbours; the stadtholder of the Netherlands constituted himself king of Belgium; Genoa,

which was previously free, was placed under the dominion of Sardinia ; and Venice and the whole of upper Italy fell under the sceptre of Austria. The usurpation of the mediatized states was consecrated. As for us, we were reduced to the necessity of making the best bargain we could of our losses. The provinces of the Rhine, Belgium, Savoy, and part of our colonies, were detached from the French kingdom without the least compensation. This, as I have already mentioned, was a grievous vexation to Louis XVIII : it was a mortification which his truly French heart could not brook. He was aware that his subjects could not be well pleased to experience, under his legitimate government, the humiliation of that national glory to which a usurper had added so much lustre. He felt too how much the conduct of his brother sovereigns was calculated to compromise royalty. The congress of Vienna, by confounding justice with injustice, and acting with the most notorious bad faith where principles of the purest honour should have prevailed, levelled a blow at the majesty of thrones which might have proved fatal.

While poor France was thus the sport of treachery abroad, her aspect at home was not more auspicious. Deaths, funerals, and mourning, cast a gloom over the court and the capital.

On the 9th of January the Princess de Léon's dress caught fire at a ball. She was dreadfully burnt and she died on the 11th. This sad event caused a feeling of dismay throughout the court. The dreadful death of this young and beautiful woman, beloved and respected as she was for the qualities of her heart and mind, was certainly an appalling event. Her husband, the Prince de Léon and Rohan-Chabot, or rather Chabot-Rohan, for his connexion with the family of Rohan was only on the female side, became disgusted with the world, which was now nothing but a void to him. He retired to a monastery, to seek in religion the only consolation his irreparable loss admitted of.

On the 12th or 13th of the same month Mademoiselle Raucourt, the tragic actress, died. Her death was not deplored like that of the Princess de Léon; but it occasioned an uproar, which well nigh threatened to bring about a revolution. In the last moments of her life Mademoiselle Raucourt had rejected the consolations of religion and refused the pardon which the church offered to her. It is well known that in France players are excommunicated merely on the score of their profession. This anathema is of course very absurd; for, at Rome, in the capital of the christian world, catholic players enjoy all the privileges of other catholics. How-

ever, the fact is, they are excommunicated in France; but what is worse, the clergy do not treat them all equally and uniformly. In one parish the anathema is forgotten, while in another it is carried into rigorous execution. It is certainly unreasonable enough that players who have dispensed with the church during their life time, should wish to enter it after their death, and insist on getting up a last scene at their funerals. I do not like intolerance, whether of the church or the liberals. But to return to Mademoiselle Raucourt.

On the death of that lady, the Abbé Marduel, Curé of Saint-Roch did not hesitate to adopt the same course which he had observed several years before at the interment of Mademoiselle Chameroy, the opera dancer: he refused the last prayers for the soul of the deceased actress. The police of Paris, which had always been at fault on important occasions and which had not improved by being transferred from the direction of M. Beugnot to that of M. d'André, did not foresee the tumult which M. Marduel's refusal was calculated to excite, nor adopt the necessary measures to quell it.

The conductor of the funeral procession having been informed of the determination of the curé directed the hearse straight towards the burial-place. However, some riotous persons

ran forward, seized the horses' reins and forced the retinue to stop before Saint-Roch the front doors of which were closed. The crowd of idlers now encreased. Groupes were formed ; a feeling of irritation was excited ; exclamations were raised against the intolerance of the clergy and praises of Mademoiselle Raucourt resounded on all sides : " Alas ! poor woman, it was but a few days before her death that the parish officers applied to her for the offering of the holy bread. She behaved with her usual generosity, and now they refuse her christian burial."

Amidst these lamentations some of the mob succeeded in forcing a side-door of the church which they entered. The front doors were then thrown open and the body brought in, in triumph. The tumult was now greater than ever. The clergy were loaded with imprecations. The mob laughed, sang, and ridiculed the ceremonies of religious worship : it was an absolute festival of the year 93. From the abuse of religion they proceeded to the abuse of the government. Factious demagogues mingling with the rioters urged them to rebellion. They talked of breaking the chains of despotism, and it was already perceived that no great distance separated the church of Saint-Roch from the palace of the Tuileries.

Meanwhile, what were we doing on our side ? A

few wise and firm men, who were immediately convoked at the palace advised the adoption of vigorous measures; but they were not listened to. The amiable, but feeble heart of Louis XVIII revolted against every thing like severity. "Recollect," said he, "that it was before Saint-Roch that Bonaparte sacrificed the Parisians on the 13th vendémiaire. There commenced the hatred which the people conceived against him. Let us not imitate his example on the same spot: that would be ominous."

The king was also very dissatisfied with the conduct of the Curé Marduel and he vented his ill-humour in satirical observations upon the fanatics, who, he said, injured the cause of religion.

These fanatics, however, on their part, were equally displeased with his majesty. They suggested to the Abbé Rocher the propriety of calling his august penitent to serious account, to which the good abbé replied: "It would have been better to give the poor woman of Canaan a *de profundis* than to cause all this scandal."

The mob enjoyed the glory of this day undisturbed. Having roared, sung, and laughed to their hearts' content, they got tired of escorting the remains of the tragic queen, and dispersed to their homes. But this seditious tumult produced an impression very unfavourable to the monarchy, which, it was easy to perceive, was

devoid of strength or energy, and six months afterwards, its fall excited no astonishment.

We were now drawing near to the 21st of January, that day of melancholy recollections and eternal regrets. The remains of the two august victims had been found, and the feelings of all good Frenchmen demanded that they should receive the honours of royal sepulture. It was determined that the sacred ashes should be deposited in Saint Denis, and that a pompous expiatory ceremony should take place on the anniversary of the great crime. M. de Chateaubriand, whose pen is always ready to serve the cause of the Bourbons, and to render justice to their virtues, wrote for the *Journal des Débats* an admirable article announcing the solemn ceremony. This article was printed separately and thirty thousand copies of it were sold. It was, it must be confessed, a master-piece of eloquence and fine feeling. On the 28th of January the tomb of the two martyrs was opened, and the princes assembled to offer up their prayers to Heaven over the revered relics. The ceremony took place on the 21st, I shall not describe it: I will confine myself to the mention of one circumstance. When the procession arrived on the Boulevard which separates the two streets of Montmartre, a crown which was suspended above the funeral car, having, by some means or

other got entangled with the street lamp, fell and broke. That day two months the crown of Louis XVIII was transferred to the head of Napoleon.

I may be permitted to relate here a curious anecdote, and one which is but little known. I had it from Count de Pere, a peer of France, who gave it me in writing in order that I might shew it to the king. It is as follows, with the exception of some little abridgment.

“I was on a visit to Cambaceres on the eve of the 21st of January, when a conventional regicide, D.... entered; he was pale and agitated. After the usual compliments, he drew me aside and said:—‘To-morrow then is the grand day; to-morrow we are to be marked out for the poniards of the fanatics! Is this the pardon that was promised us?’ I was unwilling to alarm the man, who really appeared more dead than alive. I merely observed that there was no article in the charter which opposed the removal of the mortal remains of the royal couple.—‘It is wished to excite the fury of the people,’ replied M. D...., ‘but some day or other, we shall have the power in our hands, and then we shall see.’ Cambaceres, who had overheard the conversation, stepped up to us, and taking D.... by the hand, said: ‘Why can we not follow the hearse to-morrow, dressed in mourning and bear-

ing torches? Surely this proof of remorse is due to France and to ourselves! ”

During the empire, Napoleon used to love to tease Cambaceres by pulling him by the ear and saying: “My dear Cambaceres, if ever the Bourbons return, you will be hanged.”

While the royalists were consoled by these expiatory ceremonies, Bonaparte's generals, finding that they could not maintain their ground against the emigrants under the monarchy, sought to subvert the new order of things. Among the number was General Excelmans. He was a brave officer, and even possessed administrative talents; but his impetuosity of character frequently led him into acts of imprudence. This was evident in his correspondence with Murat; that correspondence was intercepted and the general was arrested. He escaped, but afterwards re-appeared and demanded to be instantly brought to trial. He was referred to the court-martial sitting at Lille of which marshal Mortier was president. He was tried, and having proved his innocence he was immediately acquitted. The issue of this trial gave great umbrage to the court; when I say the court I mean the courtiers, for the king was by no means displeased at it. On the contrary, he was much gratified at this proof of the independence of courts-martial.

Meanwhile, there existed extraordinary circumstances which the king himself could not account for. Peace had now been signed for several months : France was exhausted or rather drained, and yet the allied forces still remained in arms on the frontier. Their threatening aspect alarmed those whose cause they had so well served. Accounts from Vienna stated that the ambition of Austria was not satisfied by the four or five provinces which had been surrendered to her. The Duke of Wellington was suddenly called to the congress. He took a hasty leave of the king, and though he said nothing alarming, there was so much mystery in his departure that it naturally excited suspicion. The truth was, that machinations were carrying on against the Bourbons, but with so much art and secrecy, that it would have been difficult to seize the first thread of the fatal plot that was hatching.

A crime which was committed about this period might have had the effect of opening the eyes of the government : General Quennel was one evening taken by a pretended friend to a secret meeting in the Rue du Faubourg Saint Jacques. The general imagined that he was merely going to a meeting of free-masons ; but what was his surprise to find himself amidst a party of conspirators, who expected to find in him a man ready to join them. In this, however,

they were mistaken ; for, as soon as the general found where he was and to whom he had been introduced, he expressed the most vehement indignation. The conspirators then became alarmed ; they trembled at having confided their secret to a man who might betray them. They concerted together in an under-tone and then asked the general to take an oath to observe profound silence respecting what had come to his knowledge. He did so. A carriage was offered to convey him home which he accepted. Some of the conspirators accompanied him and one of the party performed the office of coachman. It is probable that the carriage crossed one of the bridges, for a few days afterwards General Quennel's body was found in the river.

Such occurrences ought to have warned the government to be on its guard : the police, which might have prevented the evil, was confounded when it happened. M. d'André, whose intentions were honest, unfortunately did not possess common sense. Several drolleries which were related of him very much amused the court, and made the king laugh heartily. But it was no time for laughing ; for we had now arrived at the last day of February 1815.

CHAPTER VI.

Anecdotes of M. d'André.—Departure of the Duke and Duchess of Angoulême.—I receive visits from the Duke de Ro-vigo and Fouché.—Louis XVIII.—The Chevalier de Fleyre.—The landing of Napoleon.—The king.—Measures adopted by the ministers.—Baron de Vitrolles.

WE now entered upon the month of March, a month which, in the preceding year, had been so happy to the friends of the monarchy; but which, this year proved so fatal to them. During the storm which was gathering in the South, the ministers, lulled in security, exercised their functions in the most easy and agreeable manner imaginable. The public offices were, perhaps a little neglected; but the ante-chambers were full, and every thing went on smoothly. I was one evening in the *salon* of M. d'André, when an honest country-gentleman from Avignon entered, and stepped up to the minister apparently with the intention of speaking to him on business.

“ Ah! are you there?” said the gallant M. d'André, “ well! are the ladies of Avignon as pretty as ever?”

“ Sir,” replied the gentleman, who was a man about M. d'André's own age! “ I think they used to be prettier.”

“ Oh! I understand you; they used to like you and me better than they now do,” replied M. d’André smiling. He then left his visitor with a look which seemed to say: we will talk of business to-morrow.

Is it surprising that M. de Bourrienne should have proposed himself as a substitute for M. d’André in a post which the latter was so incompetent to fill? I may relate another little scene of which I was a witness on the 2nd of March: I was in company with M. d’André at a numerous party given by Madame de la F——at whose house I may mention *en passant* that some persons connected with the Bank had established roulette and *rouge et noir* tables to the great profit of the lady. M. de M——, who had just returned from Italy, was mentioning to the company the alarms excited in that country by the plots which were hatching at Porto-Ferrajo. He spoke of the active movements of the agents of Napoleon and the hostile preparations of the latter. Some individuals of the party participated in the apprehensions of M. de M—— when M. d’André suddenly rose from his chair, and stepping up to the fire-place, harangued the company in the following terms:

“ It is very extraordinary that right thinking people should always be the first to censure the government. For Heaven’s sake! ladies and

gentlemen, do give the ministers credit for common sense. If you think them indifferent to passing events, you are strangely mistaken; they see every thing, watch every thing, and what is better, adopt precautions against every thing. You, therefore, have no need to be alarmed at that which does not disturb them. A great deal is said about the Isle of Elba; but I do assure you that every step, every movement of Bonaparte's, is carefully noted. Elba is surrounded by numerous cruizers; all who enter or quit the Island are carefully examined. Government daily receives a detailed bulletin of all that takes place there. That which arrived yesterday, and the contents of which I will communicate to you, will shew you, whether or not there is any ground for alarm."

The director-general then drew the official bulletin from his pocket. The company eagerly gathered round him and he read as follows:

" Monseigneur, since I have been here I have made good use of my time. Under pretence of being engaged in matters of business I make myself acquainted with all that is said and done in Porto-Ferrajo. Napoleon is far from enjoying good health; though but young, he is already assailed by the infirmities of old age. The scurvy to which he is a victim, has lately made new ravages on his constitution. He rarely goes out;

and he sees the English much less frequently than he used to do. People complain of the difficulty of getting access to him. He seeks all possible means of amusing himself; and he is now enlarging the works of the iron mine of Crio. Three thousand workmen are employed on the great road which is to join this town to that of Porto-Longone. Napoleon sometimes visits the works, and sometimes he is seen walking on the sea-shore, and diverting himself for a quarter of an hour at a time by throwing little pebbles into the sea, which is a symptom of approaching madness. At other times he shuts himself up for whole days in his closet, sits up all night, and is out of humour with every body. Two Polish lancers have obtained their discharge, a decoration, and three francs for their subsistence from hence to Poland. Lieutenant Tal....., one of our old officers has married a rich young heiress of Porto-Longone; but many of the other French officers are beginning to get tired of the place. Communications with the continent are very rare. General Fior.....: and some Corsican officers having quitted the kingdom of Italy, because the Emperor of Austria did not abide by the capitulation, have arrived in Elba; but whether they intend to remain here or to return to their native place I know not. Three young Frenchmen, having within these few days been presented to Napoleon, he said to them:

‘Go and serve your good King; be loyal and faithful to him.’ In short I can assure your Excellency that nothing escapes my vigilance, and that I can answer for every thing.”

Having finished the reading of this document M. d’André cast a glance of satisfaction around him, as much as to say to his auditors: what do you think of this!—After allowing him to enjoy his triumph for a few moments I stepped up to him and whispered in his ear: “The communication which you have just read is a hoax which has been played upon you, or which you wish to play upon us. It is dated several months back. I read it some time ago in a number of the *Spectateur*, where you may see it also if you wish.” I told him nothing but the truth. What could be more ridiculous than for poor M. d’André to be reading to us such news on the 2nd of March, when Bonaparte had landed at Cannes on the 1st.

The Duke of Angoulême and Madame Royale had just set out for Bordeaux to celebrate the anniversary of the arrival of the prince in that city, when I received in succession two visits, the object of which unfortunately I soon ascertained. I had not seen the Duke de Rovigo for some time when he presented himself to me on the 3rd of March. There was a constraint in his whole behaviour which at first I could not un-

derstand, but which I can now plainly account for: he was afraid lest the plot which was ripe for explosion should not succeed.

"Ah! duke," said I as he entered, "where have you been? I have not seen you for an age."

"I have resigned," replied he, "since they will not turn my services to account. I shall retire from business and devote myself to my family."

I complimented M. de Rovigo on his resignation. "What a fool M. d'André is!" resumed the old minister of police. "I could cheat him with his eyes open."

"I dare say you could. He is a great simpleton," said I laughing. The duke did not seem to know the full extent of the truth of my remark. He then began to ask me many questions as to whether Napoleon's return was spoken of at court. My answers must have convinced him that no such thing was suspected and he retired satisfied.

A few hours after this, the Duke of Otranto made his appearance. After the first compliments he said:

"You have seen Savary this morning."

"What! do you still fill your old functions?" enquired I.

"No," said he. "But I think it right to maintain a prudent reserve towards Savary."

He has been telling you falsehoods to prevent you from discovering the truth."

"What do you mean! what truth?"

"I allude to the machinations which are carrying on. Great events are impending. They will neither believe me nor employ me; but ere a month is ended, all that I have foreseen will come to pass."

"You alarm me!"

"Listen to me," replied Fouché with a composure worthy of his deceit. "You often see the king: You will see him this evening. Advise him to be on his guard against those who are working his destruction. I have not had the means of ascertaining all, but I know that a great danger threatens him."

"Heavens! they surely will not assassinate him!" I exclaimed.

"No, no," replied Fouché, smiling. "He is in no danger of being assassinated but only of losing his throne."

"There is a conspiracy on foot then?"

"Probably; and the journey of Bertrand's brother has no other object than to gain over the army to the cause of the emperor. I say again, advise the king to be on his guard. If he wishes to be better informed let him send for me and I will reveal to him all I know. I will convince him that his Montesquiou, his Vitrolles,

his Blacas and all his other great statesmen, are mere asses in politics."

I report this last phrase word for word. Fouché left me; but the hypocrite took care not to tell me that he himself was taking an active part in the conspiracy to which he alluded;—that he knew the day and the hour at which Napoleon would set foot on the French territory. However his communication, such as it was, alarmed me, and I hastened to the Tuileries.

Louis XVIII, observing my agitation, asked me what news I brought. I related my conversation with Fouché. The king listened to me attentively, reflected a moment, and then sent for the Count de Blacas, to whom I repeated my story. When I had done, the count said :

" Sire, I think the Duke of Otranto speaks in a very mysterious way. If he really knows things so important to the monarchy, why does he not express himself clearly? the fact is, he wants to insinuate himself into your confidence; but for my part, I think him a man more dangerous than useful."

" But the conspiracy, Sir," resumed I eagerly, " the conspiracy?"

" Madam," replied Count Blacas, in a jeering tone, " it is a dreadful affair certainly! The fact

is, two discontented military officers cannot speak to each other, nor two discharged clerks meet in the street, but the alarm of a plot is raised."

Then turning to the king he added :

" Rely on it, Sire, these absurd stories are unworthy of attention. Fear nothing—*dormez sur les deux oreilles*. Your faithful subjects will watch over your safety."

" 'Then,' said the king, " you think it unnecessary to send for the Duke of Otranto !"

" I do, Sire."

" Very well then, we need not disturb him."

Such was the result of my advice, thanks to M. de Blacas.

On the 4th of March Fouché paid me another visit. He again spoke to me of Napoleon's conspiracy ; but I paid little attention to what he said. The fact is, I was busy giving directions for a new dress which I wanted to wear next evening at a ball at the Duchess de Ds ; and I begged that the Duke of Otranto would excuse me.

" Well, Madam," said he significantly, " amuse yourself as long as you can. You will dance to-morrow for the last time."

This I thought was merely the language of a dissatisfied man, and it gave me no uneasiness.

Accordingly, next evening about eight o'clock I was just going to dress for the ball when the Chevalier Fleyre, called on me.

"I wish to speak to you immediately," said he with an air of agitation.

I desired my waiting-women to withdraw and I eagerly asked the chevalier what he wanted with me.

"Ah!" said he, "we are lost. Bonaparte has landed on the coast of Provence and is on his way to Paris."

"Impossible! absurd!" I exclaimed.

"But unfortunately, it is true," resumed the chevalier. "I heard it from Cambacérès, who received the news within these ten minutes. He is greatly alarmed and he begged that I would come and inform you of what had happened in order that you might communicate the intelligence to his majesty if he has not yet heard it."

"If he has not yet heard it! . . . Then other people are better informed than he?"

"Most certainly. The news will not probably be known to government until to-morrow morning."

I asked the chevalier a thousand questions. I thought the story would be laughed at at the Tuileries. But when I could no longer doubt the truth of what I heard, I flew immediately to the palace.

My appearance surprised the king; who asked why I was not at the ball? I told him my errand; he began to laugh at what he called my panic terrors. While he was joking me about my credulity, MM. de Poix, de Blacas, and de Montesquiou, entered, and confirmed what it had been my unpleasant task to communicate to his majesty. On hearing them the king hid his face in his hands and remained for some moments absorbed in profound reflexion; then raising his noble head, to which grief had imparted an expression of solemnity, "Well," said he, "the revolution has begun again. Alas! what errors have brought us to this!" They attempted to console him. "Gentlemen," continued he, "the best thing you can do is to acknowledge you have been deceived. The usurper has formidable partizans and ere long we shall be enveloped in the treason which your inefficient measures have not been able to prevent."

The Count de Blacas made some remarks on the madness of Bonaparte. "Blacas," my friend, said the king in a tone of bitterness, "you are a good fellow; but I was grievously deceived when I mistook your devotedness for talent."

The war-minister who had been so unjustly an object of distrust now arrived. He saw the

magnitude of the danger and he suggested the best plans for averting it. He wished that all the troops of the South should be collected in different army-corps in order that they might follow Bonaparte and cut off his retreat. But he plainly told the king that it would be necessary to place this army under the command of skilful generals and not to consign it to inexperienced men. But this was looked upon as the advice of a traitor.

It was determined that Monsieur accompanied by the Duke of Orleans and Marshal Macdonald should set out next morning for Lyons, where the royal family believed themselves to be adored. This, however, was a mistake; the people of Lyons, it is true, subsequently evinced the warmest attachment to the Bourbons, but not at the period here alluded to. The most extensive powers were transmitted to the Duke of Angoulême at Bordeaux. He was directed to establish in the South a provisional government independent of that of Paris. It was on the Duke of Angoulême that the hopes of the royal family principally rested. The Duke of Bourbon received the necessary power for raising a levy *en masse* in La Vendée. In short, all the Princes received missions with the exception only of the Duke of Berri, from whose imprudent

courage danger was probably apprehended ; he remained with the king.

Baron de Vitrolles was for going to extremities : he proposed that Louis XVIII. should immediately quit the capital, and establish his throne in the South until the troubles were quelled. This project appeared like madness. To adopt it would have been to forfeit the attachment of Paris. The king decidedly rejected it. "It is strange," said he to M. de Vitrolles, "that you should advise me to commence the conflict in the way in which, at the worst, it ought to be ended."

Next day it was thought expedient, to get rid of such a counsellor as M. de Vitrolles. He was sent to Toulouse ; and he made such use of this mark of confidence, that he soon lost what little influence remained to him.

CHAPTER VII.

The palace of the Tuileries after the landing of Bonaparte.— Ministerial spectres.—Goings and comings.—The Marchioness de M.... learning to fire pistols.—The political factotum.—Military committee at the house of M. Roux-Laborie.—Evening party on the 17th of March.—The different means of resisting Bonaparte discussed.—M.M. Lainé, de Chateaubriand, Benjamin Constant, and Madame de Stael.—M. de Salvandy, *the mousquetaire gris*.

IN sketching the grand *Panhypocrisiade* of the month of March, as M. Népomucène Lemercier would call it, my object is not so much to class the varying scenes which each succeeding day produced, as to describe the feelings to which those scenes gave birth. But so many new sensations have succeeded those of that period, that often, in spite of myself, I now regard only the amusing side of an event, which at the time, filled me as well as others with alarm.

One fact, which admirably shows the state of France, at the commencement of 1815, is, that only ten months after the re-installation of a dynasty which had been absent for five and twenty years, the slumbering epimenidic ministry of the time had entirely forgotten the giant of the tempests, whom foreign cabinets like good court

friends, had fixed almost on the very coast of Provence. The *paternal anarchy* of the day, as it was called by the Count de Beugnot, had ceased to think of Bonaparte, to whom all, except our diplomatists, had directed their attention. The minds of our rulers were set perfectly at rest by the letters patent of security which the first writer of the age, (in whom was concentrated all the talent of our poor party,) had given them in his energetic reply to Carnot's Memorial. The government is strong, it is indestructible, said M. de Chateaubriand, and the echo of this affirmation, which alas! was more poetical than real, still resounded in our ministerial saloons, when it was silenced by an echo from Cannes of a very different nature.

When I recollect the countenances I saw on the day after the famous telegraphic dispatch, I am almost tempted to believe that, instead of sending an army to oppose Bonaparte, it would have answered every purpose to have dispatched a host of these ministerial spectres. He was superstitious, and who knows what effect these phantoms might have produced on his mind? The sight of the Abbé de Montesquiou, for example, escorted by M. Guizot, who was his secretary before he became the interpreter of Shakspeare, might perhaps have saved the monarchy. But I say this not with any feeling

of ill-nature towards the secretary-general of the minister of the interior, who, I must confess, in the circle of his petty influence at that time, did not always treat me as he ought to have done.

The first stunning effect of the fatal news being once over, every day produced a vacillation between fear and hope. Towards the end of the empire, I had an opportunity of observing how readily people of any particular party exhibited the most contradictory feeling, so that the fears of to-day seemed to inspire the confidence of to-morrow. Had not the most tender interest called me to the palace, curiosity might have afforded me a sufficient excuse for shewing myself there. Certainly it was not this last sentiment only that attracted the concourse of persons of every rank and description who thronged the corridors of the palace. There were national guards with their wives who had come to view the apartments; body guards who had come to visit their comrades on duty; but there was a more than usual number of persons collected round the door of M. Hue, then first valet-de-chambre to the king, and keeper of the treasury of the military household and the privy purse; and I distinctly heard remarks which savoured rather of a financial than a monarchical spirit, such as: "Provided *the other* do not return until we are paid!"

I went to call on M. d'Escars, the master of the household, to thank him for a note I had received from him a few days before. I thought that the worthy M. d'Escars, whom Louis XVIII honoured with his particular friendship and intimacy, might give me some information respecting the royal mind; for I never presumed to believe that, in this great crisis of the monarchy, his majesty might not have secrets which he did not choose to communicate to a woman.

"You cannot see my master, Madam," said his valet-de-chambre, "for he is very ill; and I am sorry to say it is all my fault."

"How so, pray?"

"Why, Madam, in my alarm at the news which you of course have heard, I was stupid enough to ask my master some questions about it yesterday evening, when he was undressing. He knew nothing about it; he had seen the king in the evening; but his majesty, knowing my master's susceptibility after dinner, and knowing too that we had a large party that day, was reluctant to expose his master of the household to a shock which might have made him repent in the royal presence of having so handsomely done the honours of the table. But, thank heaven! the worst is over; some tea and the improving news received this morning afford a hope that my master will be able to see visitors to-morrow."

It was certainly a severe stroke to a friend of the monarchy, who in his hospitable endeavours to set his guests a good example had indulged a little too freely in *crepinettes*!''*

In spite of the melancholy aspect of events, I could not help smiling at the mishap of poor M. d'Escars, and reflecting on the yet living power of the prisoner of the Isle of Elba, whose first step on the continent was a shock to all fortunes, to all thrones, and even to some stomachs. I repaired to the office of the king's chamber secretary. There all was confusion: some evincing the most disgraceful cowardice, and others the most ridiculous swaggering. A little abbé, whose name I have forgotten, was delivering a lecture upon war and military tactics to some poor clerks who, seeking no better than to be persuaded of the untruth of the unpleasant reports, allowed the surplliced orator to prove that the conqueror of Marengo was sure of being caught by the gendarmerie.

It is impossible to form an idea of the Quixottic devotedness to the altar and the throne which had taken possession of some individuals. On my return home I found several letters from people, who, knowing my connexions, begged

* Somebody to whom I afterwards related this anecdote informed me that *crepinettes* were an exceedingly complicated dish, the result of M. d'Escars' ingenious meditations during his exile.

me to present their infallible plans of preservation, for which, though they could not explain them in detail, they declared they were ready to answer with their heads. Heavens! how many heads would have been forfeited had they been taken at their word! But if the absurdity of these saviours of their country was in some the candid expression of the most noble sentiments, it was in others too evidently the prospectus of of conduct which was likely to be changed with the events of the morrow. The mania was universal; superior and inferior minds were alike engaged in resolving the problem of resistance to Bonaparte. Fools and men of sense were, for the first time, jumbled together in our saloons; no one could attend to his own private business without getting engaged in public affairs, and a ridiculous feeling of military pretension pervaded the most peaceable classes of the citizens. I called on a lady of rank one morning, and I found her in the garden of her hotel taking lessons in firing pistols, from a young officer of the *maison rouge*. "My dear," said she to me, without suspending her practice, "you should do as I do; our enemy, the enemy of women, is at our doors. We know not what may happen; therefore, we should adopt proper precautions and bear in mind the example of Joan of Arc."

Having taken leave of the military marchioness

as soon as I could, I went to call upon an advocate, who is very famous though he never pleads. I allude to M. Roux-Laborie, who was then engaged in an affair in which I was greatly interested; I thought I had come to a legal consultation, but I found a council of war. M. Laborie is an indispensable character in all political dramas. He is a sort of agent for the ambitious, he transacts business for men in office, and sometimes even takes upon himself to direct the government; he is the busiest man in Paris; he has been the faithful Achates of every ministerial *Æneas* for the last five and twenty years; he is endowed with inexhaustible sensibility and activity, and on the same morning he is ready to weep with the unfortunate and to rejoice with the triumphant. He assists disgrace in its removal, and accompanies favour in its installation; in short, M. Roux-Laborie is a *factotum* perfectly unique in his way. It is somewhat extraordinary, that a man who is always involved in such a labyrinth of business has never committed but one fault and has experienced but one disappointment. I have heard the history of this blunder; and a solitary error in a man's life is of course a curious thing.

In 1809 Napoleon's divorce was the subject which secretly engrossed the attention of the court. It was understood that the sovereign

wished to marry again ; but it was not known with whom. The grand dignitaries of the empire always made a point of ascertaining if possible, what opinions they should adopt in all given cases. M. Roux-Laborie was commissioned by the minister of foreign affairs to discover the sentiments of the arch-chancellor ; and the arch-chancellor was no less anxious to know the views of the minister for foreign affairs. Each was fearful of differing from the sovereign, and they knew not to which of the two he would first unfold his mind. M. Roux-Laborie succeeded in penetrating the secret opinions of the two grand dignitaries ; but alas ! the result of all his intelligence and active perseverance was marred by a fatal blunder. He unluckily misdirected the two notes which were destined to communicate the important discovery to his employers. That which was intended for Cambacérès fell into the hands of the minister for foreign affairs, and *vice-versa*. They immediately perceived that the negotiator who was supposed to be exclusively devoted to each party was a worshipper of every god. As soon as this paganism came to light, M. Roux-Laborie lost the favour of the imperial government, and this circumstance naturally rendered him one of the principal partizans of the restoration. Thus, poor M. Laborie has obtained a reputation for versatility, which is, after all, nothing but an ex-

treme readiness to make himself useful to his friends, to whatever party they may belong.

But to return to my visit to the indefatigable political broker. I had the greatest difficulty in the world to get access to him; I was told that he was engaged in an important conference. I sent in a line which was delivered immediately, and the folding-doors of his cabinet were thrown open to me. The cares of politics seemed to improve his looks rather than to produce a contrary effect. "Madam," he exclaimed with the most earnest emotion, "excuse me in the name of the throne of Saint-Louis. The safety of all depends on the business I am now engaged in. To-morrow, the day after, or any other time I shall be at your service; but I am now really making a minister of war." I withdrew recommending M. Roux-Laborie to act cautiously. Absurd as this may appear, it is certain that next day the nomination of the Duke de Feltre appeared in the *Moniteur*.

At the risk of anticipating dates, amidst the confusion of recollections that crowd upon my mind relative to this stormy period of the 20th of March, I must not omit to mention a few other particulars connected with the catastrophe of the return, of which my memory retains a faithful impression. I dined and spent the evening at the house of an intimate female friend, only three

or four days before the entry of Bonaparte. Several individuals of the first distinction, who subsequently entertained the most opposite opinions were present ; and I had an opportunity of observing how great and common minds may wander into the same absurd dreams. It was curious to see assembled in the same drawing-room, and actuated by the same feelings of patriotic alarm and anxiety for the public welfare, such persons as Madame de Staël, M. Benjamin Constant, M. Lainé, and M. de Chateaubriand, while the rest of the company were collected around them, and awaiting from their eloquent lips the sentence of victory, hope, or even life.

M. Benjamin Constant spoke first, in terms equivalent to the following: " One power is only to be resisted by another. Bonaparte is armed with the affection of the army, therefore we must oppose him by the enthusiasm of the citizens. His aspect is as imposing as the countenance of Cæsar, therefore he must be met by some man equally calculated to inspire awe. Let M. de Lafayette be appointed general in chief of the French forces."

M. de Chateaubriand, with considerable emphasis observed, that the first measure which would give power to the government was making an example of ministers guilty of so many faults, and above all such want of foresight. " Send

all the secretaries of state to Vincennes," exclaimed a small shrill voice among the crowd of auditors. "Punish them to-day, and to-morrow you will be feared and will be triumphant." I thought I recognized the treble pipe of the Abbé de Pradt; but as he is not in the habit of making such short speeches I concluded that I must have been mistaken.

M. Lainé, on whose countenance, at all times melancholy, death seemed now impressed, declared, while grief almost choked his utterance, that there was but one mode of awing the tyrant, and that was to let him see the grief and alarm which his approach excited in the capital. He proposed therefore to call out the whole population of Paris, men, women and children, and all the national guards, to await the arrival of Bonaparte without the walls, so as to intimidate him, or to move his pity, by the picture of a whole nation ready to fly at sight of the man who came to rob them of their peace.

Madame de Stael was magnificent in her imprecations, if not wise in her advice. But alas! every one retired from this party mortified and cast down; for the distinguished men who were present, by taking so many different views of the state of affairs, had, as it were, been merely making a report on the condition of the patient and his incurable wounds. I well remember

the following remark which closed this scene of political despair, and which escaped from a certain young *mousquetaire gris*: “ In critical times and in military revolutions, all parties require a powerful arm. Men who aspire to oppress or to save their fellow-creatures should combine in themselves a two-fold character, political and military: look at Cromwell, Cæsar, Washington, and Bonaparte.”

This musketeer is justly proud of combining in himself the talents of a statesman and a soldier. I have always found him too gallant not to hope one day or other to see him a minister. If he attacked the allies somewhat too severely in a pamphlet, he compensated for that fault by his defence of the Swiss-guard in the chamber. Some persons have thought proper to surname him the *Ghost of M. de Châteaubriand by moonlight*. But the time has gone by when a joke was a death-blow in France. The same railers have compared the sun of Austerlitz to a lantern.

CHAPTER VIII.

Line of conduct adopted by the king.—His address to the ambassadors.—M. d'Avaray. — Count de Gotz. — Count Pozzo di Borgo.—Conversation with Fouché.

LOUIS XVIII alone, while every one about him yielded to the influence of fear, retained his firmness and presence of mind. He was well aware that his fate depended on the course he should adopt at this critical juncture. If he did not grasp the sword, he at least armed himself with all the dignity of his rank, and calmly prepared for the worst. He did all that it was in his power to do. By several ordinances signed on the 6th of March, he convoked the two chambers, declared Napoleon Bonaparte out of the protection of the law of nations, and pronounced sentence of death not only on him, but on all his satellites, friends, and supporters! But he confined himself to these measures. In vain was he advised to arrest twenty-four of the most notorious conspirators and have them tried by a court-martial, where they would have been at once condemned without delay. He did not choose, however, to perform this act of policy.

“ Blood,” said he, “ shall not be spilt with my consent ; never, until the last extremity, will I consent to shed the blood of Frenchmen.” Here was noble language in a brother of Louis XVI !

The diplomatic body presented themselves on the 5th of March, to pay their respects to the king, and to declare to him the part they intended to adopt on the approaching crisis.

“ Gentlemen,” said Louis XVIII, “ you see me ill and in pain ; but be not deceived ; it is only a fit of the gout. Acquaint your sovereigns with the real state of things in France, and be assured that the repose of Europe will not be disturbed any more than that of my kingdom.”

He made these observations, without himself putting faith in what he said. He afterwards often told me, that, from the commencement, he apprehended the result which really ensued ; but he did not certainly anticipate so complete and sudden a defection.

I allowed the whole of the 6th to pass over, not without visiting the palace for I never stirred from it, but without presenting myself to the king. How great was my surprise to receive early on the morning of the 7th the following note :

“ Should friends be forsaken in the moment

of danger? and did you not take the oath of fidelity to me, dear countess? What has become of you these two days? Have you forgotten me in my troubles, or do you think that they make me forget you? That is impossible. On the contrary, I think of you more than ever. Perhaps there is some selfishness in this, for I want to see you, and to talk to you. Your company alone can divert the anguish both of body and mind under which I labour. Come to me then instantly. A king who is not yet dethroned impatiently awaits you."

I had scarcely given myself time to read this letter, when I flew to his majesty. On approaching him, whether overcome by sorrow, or prompted by a wish to do him honour in his misfortune, I know not; but I fell mechanically at his feet, and, seizing his hand, I kissed it and bedewed it with my tears. "Come! come! silly woman," said Louis XVIII, "why this grief? All is not lost. Surely the name of this man has not a charm in it which nothing has power to resist? I have on my side the majesty of the king of France and the armed force of friendly sovereigns."

After this address, I rose somewhat recovered, and asked his majesty, in as delicate a way as possible, if he had taken the advice of able coun-

sellors, that is to say, of other men than his ministers. "Sire," said I to him, "good physicians do not need many consultations."

"But they do not fear them," replied Louis XVIII, with some hesitation.

I at once saw by his embarrassment, how the matter stood, and that the petty feeling of self-love was always strongest, when it should be least attended to. In the mean time, M. d'Avaray entered. He was a good-natured, unassuming man. He was fully aware that he had not sufficient talent to govern the state; but, with great good sense and little ambition, he evinced an anxiety to see men at the head of affairs capable of conducting them. Such modesty is a phenomenon in courts. M. d'Avaray was quite of my opinion respecting M. de Chateaubriand, and we both talked to his majesty to such good purpose, that at length it was determined to bring to the aid of the ministry every man of ability, of whatever party or opinion.

But meanwhile a man, who continued to play the double game which he had played throughout his life, a revolutionist, a regicide, in a word, Fouché had arrived at the palace. He had been secretly conducted through the private passage, which led to the royal apartments. Louis XVIII directed me to see him, for at the same moment, Count de Gotz the Prussian ambas-

sador, and Count Pozzo di Borgo, the Russian ambassador, had come to request an audience.

Count Gotz, a true German, is rather slow of comprehension. His manners, though not without pretension, are devoid of grace. When he wishes to chat he enters upon a discussion, and when he intends to joke and be witty he unfortunately stumbles upon an argument. Notwithstanding this, he sets up for a man of gallantry and a devoted admirer of the ladies. It must however be confessed, that in this character his figure is rather against him, and I could if I chose relate an adventure of his which would prove the truth of what I assert.

Count Pozzo di Borgo, a native of Corsica, possessed all that his colleague wanted in talent and adroitness. His acute sparkling eyes announced the diplomatist at the distance of a mile. Having left his native country poor, he had risen by his own merit alone to the highest favour and fortune. Alexander looked upon him as his best counsellor, and honoured him with his utmost confidence. Count Pozzo di Borgo possessed easy manners, and, by way of imposing on those who did not know him, he made a parade of great frankness. He seemed always to say more than he intended, by which means he often induced others to say more than they ought. He even boasted of having once made M. de Talleyrand

1 speak the truth—but this appears so extraordinary that I can scarcely venture to believe it.

Louis XVIII received the two ambassadors with his accustomed serenity. He assured them that the measures adopted would suffice to arrest the advance of Napoleon. He added that, in case of necessity, he would apply to their respective courts for the aid with which they were to supply him by virtue of the secret treaty of Paris. He did not then suspect that certain powers, Austria, and Prussia for example were not strangers to the proceeding of Napoleon. This point, which an ill-conceived policy has left in obscurity, is sufficiently clear to me. I know, to a certainty, that a treaty on this subject was concluded between Austria and Napoleon, before the latter quitted the Isle of Elba, and the original copy of the treaty remained long in the hands of Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angely. Every bad business may be denied, as I have no doubt this will. But what I have here stated is true, and the conduct of the Austrian troops in 1815 is a proof of it. However, time will clear up all uncertainty.

While Louis XVIII was engaged with the ambassadors, I was in conversation with the Duke of Otranto.

“I have been summoned here,” said he. “Is it by your desire, Madam, or that of the king?”

"By my desire, Sir? you compliment me; I do not receive my visitors at the Tuileries, but I am directed to ask you for an explanation of what you yesterday said to me, and to learn whether you have any information or advice to give at the present moment."

"It is too late, Madam, it is too late; while all was calm and tranquil, advice might have been useful; but it can be of no avail in moments of trouble like the present. All hope now depends on the courage and fidelity of the troops. If they abandon the monarchy, it is lost."

I could get nothing more from Fouché. I went to inform the king of what had passed; he directed me to dismiss Fouché, with the promise that he should be sent for again. Fouché took his leave saying, "Assure the king that I am devoted to him in life and death; and that my sole ambition is to serve him."

CHAPTER IX.

Remarks on several French marshals.—The faithful.—The discontented.—Marshal Ney.—He visits the Tuileries.—His audience of the king.—Return of *Monsieur*.—The king's proclamation.—M. Lainé.—The Viscount de Chateaubriand.—The Duke de Feltre.—Disgrace of Marshal Soult.

Among those, to whom the return of Bonaparte was especially fearful may be reckoned several of his old marshals : at the head of the list stands the Prince of Wagram who, though his friend, was one of those who manifested least scruple on the subject of their desertion. Marshal Berthier, who was prized more than he deserved by Bonaparte, was a good man of business, possessing what may be called a quarter-master talent. Having become a captain in the king's body-guard ; he conceived a liking to that sort of sinecure. He devoted himself sincerely to the royal cause, and promised fidelity to the fortunes of Louis XVIII. He little thought that he should owe his death to that fidelity.

The Duke of Ragusa did not feel perfectly at ease. He had good reason to apprehend, that Napoleon would take signal vengeance for the trick he had played him in the preceding year ; and it might naturally have been expected that

fear of his old master would attach him for ever, to the Bourbons.

Augereau, a soldier of fortune, brave and brutal, mean and unprincipled, after having unconsciously conspired for Bonaparte in the events of the 18th Fructidor, abused him in good guard-house style, at the time of the restoration : Augereau was for ever ours. This political gladiator, who had built his fortune on the revolutions of his country, now saw that he was lost, should a new revolution ensue.

Marshal Victor, Duke of Belluno, had honestly rallied round the monarchy. He wished to see France free and happy, and he sincerely believed that she would be so under the paternal reign of the Bourbons. From an intrepid soldier he had risen to a skilful general. Besides, he had taken the oath of fidelity to Louis XVIII ; and his spirit would have revolted at perjury.

Marshal Mortier, Duke of Treviso resembled Victor. Every successive rank through which he had passed had been the reward of some gallant action. He was a man of tried courage ; frank without rudeness, polished without affectation, he was beloved by his inferiors and esteemed by his equals. He regarded Napoleon's return as a public calamity : he was to be depended on.

Count Gouvion Saint-Cyr was one of the few who identified their own honour with the glory

and welfare of their country. He considered that military force had reigned long enough in France; and that the time was come when the nation should repose beneath the shade of her laurels, under the protecting shield of a conciliating government, by which all past evils would be repaired.

To the list of faithful marshals I may add the Duke of Dalmatia, who was always loyal though suspected of treason; Count Jourdan, Duke of Conegliano, as able, though not so fortunate as the rest; the old Duke of Valmy, who was one of the first to lead the republican troops to victory; the Duke of Dantzick, a brave and honest man; Count Perignon, a good soldier and a better diplomatist; and finally, the veteran Serrurier, whose blood, though half frozen by age, still warms at the words honour and country.

However, there were some of Napoleon's marshals who had never been for us. Marshal Davoust, Prince of Eckmuhl, had not forgotten the reception experienced in 1814. Accustomed to military command, he could not reconcile himself to the state of inactivity to which he had been doomed. Besides, he felt deeply the injustice of which he was the victim; when he was accused of having betrayed France, because he did not surrender the fortress confided to him at the first summons of foreigners. Davoust was,

moreover, one of those gifted men, who are alike superior in the cabinet and in the field. He was as good a statesman as a soldier. He would, without doubt, have consented to serve the monarchy, had the government known how to treat him according to his merit ; but, imagining that he was looked upon only as a rebellious soldier, he longed for the opportunity of proving himself a great captain.

Marshal Massena, Prince of Essling, surnamed the *spoiled child of victory*, had viewed the restoration only as an unfortunate interruption of his ambitious dreams. He was one of those marshals who expected one day or other to be a king. The crown of Portugal had almost touched his head, and the command of a military division was too restricted a sphere for him.

There was among the old marshals one man, from whom it was impossible to tell what was to be feared or hoped ; I allude to Ney, Prince of the Moskowa. Ney was the bravest of the brave, the sword of the empire, as Massena was its shield. Europe had beheld him on every field of battle, if not always victorious, at least always worthy of being so. He was idolized by the soldiery, for he was their friend and comrade, rather than their commander. When the enemy was to be charged, Ney marched at the head of the columns ; when a

retreat sounded—he was in the rear, because there were the danger and the glory. Finally, he was surnamed the *Chevalier sans peur* of modern France; but he wanted a little more strength of character to merit all the titles of Bayard. Ney might be said to exhaust all his energies in the tumult of war, so that none remained to him when restored to the tranquillity of peace. Like a child, he was turned by every wind that blew, and would warmly advocate or oppose a cause without the least reflection. It is scarcely possible to imagine the union of so much talent and ignorance, so much courage and irresolution.

Such is my opinion of *Michael Ney*, as he called himself at a very fatal moment. I do not know whether my contemporaries will consider the portrait I have drawn of him a faithful one. I have traced it I hope with sincerity and impartiality. I wish I could pass by in silence what remains to be said of that illustrious and unfortunate man; but I must speak out. I owe it to truth, and to the character of the late king, whose memory is dear to me, to be severe in order to be just.

Marshal Ney was not in Paris when the news of Napoleon's landing arrived. The war minister sent him a dispatch, enjoining him to repair to the capital immediately, which he accordingly did. On the 6th of March, the Duke of Dalma-

tia transmitted to him the king's orders, that he should depart that same evening for Besançon, the chief town of his military government. It was wished to assemble in that town an army under the command of the marshal, to oppose Napoleon's force with advantage.

The Prince of the Moskowa undertook, without hesitation, the task assigned to him. Yielding to the inspiration of the moment, he did not reflect how difficult it would be to keep within the line of his duty. He believed that he could remain faithful to the king, because he was no longer attached to Napoleon. Deceived in his feelings, impelled by his destiny, he proceeded to the Tuileries. He first presented himself to the Duke of Berri. His royal highness received him well. In the course of conversation, the duke asked the Prince of the Moskowa whether he knew Colonel Labedoyere. The marshal replied, that young and brave officer had been one of Prince Eugene's aides-de-camp, but that he did not know him personally. After this the Duke of Berri dismissed the marshal, but not without loading him with kind words and compliments.

The marshal was leaving the Tuileries, when all at once the fatal idea struck him of renewing, by word of mouth, the homage of his respectful devotion to the king. He mentioned his intention to Baron Glouet, one of his own aides-de-

camp. The baron, who knew his general, well looked with suspicion on this fit of royalism, and tried to persuade him from presenting himself to his majesty. He even went so far as to say : " Prince, consider that you owe all to Napoleon ; in spite of his faults, I am sure you love him still ; you cannot be long his enemy, and if his good fortune compels you to surrender to him, might he not accuse you of having vowed to another the fidelity which was not required of you ?" The marshal, who was under a spell, far from listening to these wise suggestions, severely rebuffed Clouet, and presented himself to his majesty. Louis XVIII was delighted with the frank and open address of the marshal.

" Prince of the Moskowa," said he, " you may render immense service to my crown ; I shall not be ungrateful for it."

" Sire," replied Ney, " I am recompensed beforehand by all the good your majesty has done to the army, and by the favours you have heaped on me."

After the marshal had assured the king that he had no reason to doubt the devotion of the troops, he quitted his majesty's presence with protestations of eternal fidelity. But Ney, who was always irresolute, could not help saying to Baron Clouet, on descending the great staircase : " You were right, my friend, I might have dispensed

with this proceeding." As to us, who did not yet know Ney's character, we were delighted with his conduct; we already proclaimed him the saviour of the monarchy, and almost believed the story of his having boasted that he would bring back Napoleon in an iron cage. Some days passed on, and a thousand false reports were raised to divert the people of Paris. Alas! we were deceived ourselves; all the journals spread officially the report of our pretended victories, even on the 11th of March, an officer of the body-guard appeared at the window of the marshals' hall, which looked into the garden of the Tuileries, and announced to the people, that the usurper had been killed in battle and that the royal cause was secure. At that moment Monsieur and the Duke of Orleans re-entered Paris flying before Napoleon!

The return of Monsieur filled the city and court with consternation; we again began to apprehend an approaching catastrophe. The king now thought it his duty to appeal to the nation. He wrote in my presence, and without a single erasure, the following proclamation which is characterized by dignity and wisdom, and is very superior, in my opinion, to the inflated proclamations of Bonaparte.

“ Palace of the Tuileries, March 11, 1815.

“ After twenty five years of revolution we have by the signal blessing of Providence restored France to a state of happiness and tranquillity. To render this state of things durable and solid we have given to our people a charter which, by a wise constitution, secures liberty to all our subjects. This charter has been, since the month of June last, the daily rule of our conduct, and we found in the chambers of peers and deputies all the assistance necessary to aid us in maintaining the national glory. The love of our people was the recompense of our labours and the best guarantee of their prosperity. That love we confidently invoke against the enemy, who comes to pollute the French territory, and to renew civil war. Against him all opinions should unite. All who sincerely love their country, all who feel the value of a paternal government and national liberty guaranteed by laws, should henceforth have but one thought, that of destroying the oppressor who is alike the enemy of government and of liberty. All Frenchmen being equal by the constitution should be equally zealous to defend it. We address to all the appeal to save all. This is the moment for setting a great example; we expect it from a free and brave nation. We shall be always ready to direct the

enterprize on which depends the safety of France. Measures are taken to check the advance of the enemy between Lyons and Paris : our means will suffice, if the nation oppose to him the invincible obstacles of its devotedness and courage. France will not be subdued in this struggle of liberty against tyranny, of fidelity against treason, and of Louis XVIII against Bonaparte."

This proclamation, admirable as it was, nevertheless announced a melancholy truth, namely that Napoleon had found partizans and that from the sea to Lyons all the country was his. The king foresaw the last blow which fortune had in store for him : but alas ! as we have already seen, the king was the only person who retained his self-possession in this fatal catastrophe ! The *able* men began to reply that they had been consulted too late.

In the meantime M. Lainé presented himself. He suggested the convocation of the chambers as the only resource. On this occasion he proved himself, what he has been called, the republican most devoted to royalty.

" Sire," said he with tears in his eyes, " your cause is dear to us, it is the cause of liberty. He who is advancing promises us liberty also ; but we can reckon only on his tyranny. We owe

to you the charter, and the charter will be the safeguard of France."

A courtier who happened to be present, a shallow but well-meaning man, asked whether, on the contrary, it was not a proper occasion for suspending the charter.

"Suspend the charter!" cried M. Lainé; "that would be sacrificing the monarchy. Royalty can no more exist in France without that fundamental compact, than the charter can exist without the monarchy."

This was also the opinion of Louis XVIII.

Sanctioned by the permission of the king, I hastened to Viscount Châteaubriand. I found him deeply affected but not disheartened at the state of affairs. The noble writer expressed his readiness to enter the ranks as a private soldier, and to fight for the Bourbon family, whom his eloquent pen had already assisted to regain the throne. I told him the king wished to see him, and we returned together to the palace.

Louis XVIII received my illustrious friend in the most flattering manner. He conversed with him a long time on the existing situation of affairs, and imparted to him a portion of that confidence which he deserved fully to enjoy. There was one person who was not well pleased with this: viz. M. de Blacas. His vanity was

deeply mortified to see another further advanced in the king's good graces than himself. M. de Blacas ought to have known that men of mediocrity can possess authority only during a calm : when a storm arises the helm is consigned to the most skilful. But to proceed to other matters ; for I hurry on like the events which I relate.

Monsieur's return was fatal to Marshal Soult. His enemies renewed their attacks upon him, and asserted that he was responsible for all that had happened. It was affirmed that he had been instrumental in bringing back Napoleon, and that, for the better management of the plot, he had stationed on the road all those troops who were most likely to rally round their old general. Finally, to induce the king to dismiss this minister, they filled his mind with uneasiness, which however the noble confidence of the Duke of Dalmatia speedily banished. " No," exclaimed the king one day in my presence ; " no ; treason does not wear this face."

The party who wished to oust the Duke of Dalmatia from the ministry had in view to substitute in his place General Clarke Duke of Feltre. That diplomatic general had fought well. He had performed several gallant exploits, but no great action. He might be called the hero of trifles ; he devoted the most minute attention

to little things. I never beheld more extravagant vanity. He pretended to be descended from some petty king of Ireland, and his escutcheon was to be seen engraved or painted in all corners of his hotel and even on the most trivial articles of his wardrobe.

Such was the man who was proposed for, and actually, became the substitute for Marshal Soult. By dint of intrigue the Duke of Feltre obtained the portfolio of the war department, and the poor monarchy got from bad to worse, to the great mortification of M. Ronx-Laborie, who, as I have before mentioned, boasted of having given a considerable lift to the new minister.

CHAPTER X.

Review of the national guard.—The king's second proclamation.—M. de Sémonville.—Conversation with Feuché —The king's dissatisfaction.—Curious letter of Count de M.....—The Austrian Ambassador visits the king.—Conversation with M. Benjamin Constant.—His article of the 19th of March.

LOUIS XVIII unfortunately had not so much health as courage. The gout, probably aggravated by mental anxiety, left him not a moment's repose. I witnessed his sufferings, I saw with

what fortitude he struggled against them, and I urged him not to fatigue himself. The morning of the day on which he was to review the national guard arrived. Père Elisée told me that the exertion would be attended by great danger to the king, and that it would be proper to dissuade him from going out. I therefore entreated the king to remain in the palace; but all I said was unavailing. He went to the review; but illness triumphed over his resolution. He was unable to go through all the ranks of the national guard; and he returned to the palace almost dying. Dismay prevailed at the Tuileries. We felt that at that moment the king alone could save France. Notwithstanding his situation, he was able to dictate the following proclamation to the army:

“ Louis, by the grace of God, King of France and Navarre, to our brave armies greeting.

“ Brave soldiers, the glory and strength of our kingdom!—in the name of honour, your king commands you to be faithful to your colours. You have sworn fidelity to him, you will not betray your oaths. A general, whom you would have defended until the last drop of your blood, had he not absolved you by a formal abdication, has restored you to your legitimate king. Mingled together in the great family of which he is the father, and amidst which you will dis-

tinguish yourselves only by the most brilliant services, you have again become my children ;— I hold you all in my heart ; I associated myself with the glory of your triumphs, even when they were not achieved in my cause. Recalled to the throne of my fathers, I congratulate myself on seeing it defended by those brave men who are so worthy to defend it. Soldiers ! I appeal to your pride, I claim your fidelity. Your ancestors formerly rallied round the white plume of the great Henry. I have placed his descendant at your head : follow him faithfully in the paths of honour and duty ; aid him in defending the public liberty which is attacked, the constitutional charter which it is wished to destroy ;—protect your wives, your parents, your children, your property, against the tyranny which threatens them. Is not the enemy of your country also your enemy ? Has he not speculated in your blood, trafficked in your toils and wounds ? Was it not to gratify his insatiable ambition that he led you through a thousand dangers to sanguinary and useless victories ?

“ Our fair France was not enough for him : but he would drain your population and waste your blood in new conquests, at the furthest extremity of the world. Distrust his perfidious promises. Your king calls on you. The country claims you. Let honour fix you firmly to your flags ; and my reward awaits you. It is from your ranks—

from among faithful soldiers—that I shall choose my officers. Public gratitude will requite your services. Yet one effort, and you will enjoy the glory and the glorious repose that you deserve.

“March then, brave soldiers! at the call of honour; and yourselves arrest the first traitor who would attempt to seduce you. If any amongst you have already lent ear to the perfidious suggestions of rebels, there is still time to return to the paths of duty,—the door is open to repentance. It was thus that several squadrons, whom a traitor attempted to seduce, near la Fere, themselves compelled him to fly. Let all the army profit by this example. Let the numerous corps who have remained uncorrupted and have refused to join in rebellion close their battalions to attack and repel the traitors. Soldiers! you are Frenchmen—I am your king—it is not in vain that I confide to your courage and fidelity the safety of our beloved country.

“LOUIS.”

It was in Paris that the king experienced least support, in spite of the enthusiasm that prevailed in his good city. The Chamber of Deputies, from which wonders were expected, did no great deal; for that assembly was more afraid of the emperor than devoted to the king. The Chamber of Peers, too, shewed more apathy

than might have been wished ; awaiting rather than promoting the measures which it was necessary to adopt. M. Hugnet, Count de Semonville, who had been appointed grand referendary, was exceedingly embarrassed. He liked his good post, his fine suite of apartments in the Luxembourg, and his enormous salary. He naturally wished to retain all these good things, and he was anxious for the security of the monarchy, on which he knew the security of his place depended. He was the most conciliating man in the world, always adopting the opinion of the person with whom he conversed, because he had none of his own ; saying civil things to every body and accommodating himself to all parties. The dear palace of the Luxembourg was all the world to him, and the fear of being turned out of it had roused his energy in no inconsiderable degree. For instance, on the 20th. of March, he registered in the Chamber of Peers Louis XVIII's protest against the forcible usurpation of Napoleon. There was some courage in this. Personal interest sometimes prompts us to act well.

The students of law and medicine set off in mass to oppose the common enemy. The garden of the Tuileries was thronged from morning to night, by an immense concourse of people, who amused themselves by exclaiming *Vive le Roi*. I should have wished to see every man shoulder

a musket, instead of wasting time in this idle way.

On the morning of the 12th of March, I met the Duke of Otranto walking in the Rue Saint-Dominique. He eagerly came up to me, and after the usual compliments said :

" All is going on well. It is all over with Bonaparte's mad enterprize. Burgundy and the Bourbonnais have risen in mass, and by this time every thing is settled."

" Surely," replied I, " you cannot believe this story?"

" I know it for a certainty. France will have nothing more to do with Bonaparte."

" France may possibly dislike him ; but you, at least, do not.

" Oh ! that is a most unjust suspicion. I shall never espouse his cause again. I have good reason to hate him ; but," added Fouché, artfully, " there is great alarm at the palace."

" Who told you that?"

" It is so reported. I have heard that the crown diamonds are packed up."

" I know nothing of what the keeper of the wardrobe may be doing ; but at all events it is right to take precautions against the worst."

" Ah ! you have not got rid of your chimerical fears ?"

" Nor you of your mistaken security."

" I see I am no favourite of yours."

“ Well, I suppose that is not a matter of any great importance to you.”

“ I beg your pardon, I assure you it is. The fact is, if you would place more confidence in me we might serve the king usefully.”

“ Prove to me that you are sincere.”

“ I cannot now ; but ere long you will do me justice. Meanwhile, assure the king that I shall be for ever devoted to his service.”

Here ended our conversation.

Some days after this, I was with the king, when an august personage was announced. I had just time to escape into an adjoining closet, in which I was accustomed to conceal myself, when the king wished to be alone.

“ Sire,” said the personage, “ the most distressing reports are in circulation. It is alleged that Marshal Ney will betray us. What are we to do ?”

“ Die at our post,” replied Louis XVIII.
“ Die with honour, if all hope be lost.”

“ But, Sire, while a portion of the kingdom is occupied by faithful troops, there still is hope. Would it not be well, if we were to retire to the extreme frontier of the kingdom, into some fortress whence we might communicate with the allies ?

“ To quit Paris would be to fly like cowards. My place is here, and here I will remain.”

“ Louis XVI was sacrificed because he quitted

Paris too late. Believe me, Sire, courage is good, but prudence is useful."

"Courage and prudence, all demand that I should remain in Paris. If every one had done as I have, we should not have been brought to this."

I heard a few words resembling excuses. The personage withdrew and I rejoined the king.

"Come here, come here," said he, "I must give you a reprimand, for I find that you are as bad as the rest."

"How Sire?"

"Why did you not inform me that the government was daily creating dissatisfied enemies? Bonaparte fell because he would not hear truth, and I shall fall because the truth has not been told me."

This idea had for some time preyed on the mind of Louis XVIII.

"Several intercepted letters were brought to the king from the black cabinet of the post office. One of them appeared to me worth preserving. I subjoin a copy of it. The writer was a man of rank, who first held a situation in the household of Bonaparte, and afterwards in that of Louis XVIII. The letter was addressed to his wife.

“ My Dear Love,

“ Matters are getting worse and worse, we know not which way to turn. We must however strive to keep on good terms with all parties; that is the grand point. Do not hesitate to boast of great royalism, but let it be in good company. If I were you I would keep at home. In existing circumstances, that is the surest way to avoid getting into trouble.

“ Inform D . . . privately that he is violently suspected of Bonapartism, and that he runs a good chance of being arrested some fine morning. I shall be sorry if any thing happen to him. It would be prudent also, I think, to advise his son, the chevalier, to enter the royal volunteers. The father being on one side, and the son on the other, they would be prepared for any event; for we know not what may happen.

“ I have not a moment I can call my own. I spent last night with M. de Seze, and this morning I have lost, I know not how, three good hours in chatting with Carnot. I go to the palace twice a day. I cannot be blamed for this, my duty calls me thither, and besides I am devoted to the king.

“ Send me my chamberlain's robes. I am afraid they will get moth-eaten; and besides I shall want them shortly in Paris.

“ The Duke of Berri overwhelms me with kindness. I can never be sufficiently grateful to him. Send me likewise the three letters of King Joseph; they are autographs of great value and must not be lost.

“ Adieu, my love. Fear nothing on my account. Whatever may happen, I will not quit the Tuileries. Once more adieu.

“ COUNT DE M....”

This letter might very naturally be looked upon as a fabrication. Yet, I positively affirm that the original is in my possession. How many other proofs of courtly baseness might I not adduce! How many petitions to the king, could I make known—petitions in which avarice was scarcely concealed beneath the disguise of attachment; and seeking to derive advantage from a power, which was tottering to destruction. Applications were made for places, cordons and money. The monarchy was pillaged, and every one strove to appropriate to himself the best share of the spoil.

Baron de Vincent requested an audience of the king, which was immediately granted. Here again I was like Agrippina, *invisible and present*. The baron expressed his sorrow for what had happened, upon which Louis XVIII said in a firm tone: “ Well, Sir, what course do you in-

tend to adopt?"—The Austrian diplomatist seemed a little embarrassed at this question, and after a little hesitation he answered, that the king, his master, was anxious to accommodate matters, that he was willing henceforth to renounce the crown of France, to which he might lay claim in the right of his daughter, and that as a compensation he demanded the crown of Naples.—“ I did not expect,” replied Louis XVIII with more than usual dignity, “ that your master would hope to obtain from me more than from the assembled congress. I have no personal power over the kingdom of Naples ; but, as the head of my family, I will never consent to diminish its rights. He who now occupies the throne is a soldier of fortune, who, doubtless will not long continue King, but I would rather leave him in possession of the sovereignty than renounce it by a treaty. I trust entirely to the justice of my cause. I do not acknowledge any claim of the Archduchess Maria Louisa. It is for your master to determine whether he will go to war with me in his son-in-law’s cause.

“ Sire,” said M. de Vincent, “ he has no such design.”

“ I flatter myself he has not ; yet, if he wishes to continue on terms of union with the allied sovereigns, why has he entered into a secret compact with the man who comes to rekindle the brand

of war in my dominions?"—The confused reply of the ambassador clearly convinced the king of that which he already suspected, namely, that Austria was not acting fairly in this business. As Baron de Vincent could say nothing to the purpose, he thought it expedient to terminate the audience.

On my return home I found M. Benjamin Constant, the cleverest of all our political aspirants, the most logical of all our orators, and the most unreasonable of men in spite of his reasoning powers. I was astonished to see him.

"Ah! Monsieur, what news?" said I.

"The ruin of France, madam. In the moment of danger I come to offer my services if the king will be pleased to accept them."

"No doubt he will accept them and joyfully. Men like you are rare, and if you become a royalist this week you may render us important assistance."

"Is this a compliment or a jest?" said Baron de Rebecque smiling.

"I esteem you too highly to take the liberty of jesting with you."

M. de Constant then told me what he had done and what he intended to do. He shewed me something which he had been writing, and which he intended inserting in the journals if it met with his majesty's approval. It was the famous ar-

ticle which appeared in the *Journal des Débats* on the 19th of March. I make a point of reading it on every anniversary of that fatal day :

Sunday, 19th of March, 1815.

“ The representatives of the nation have laid at the foot of the throne the expression of their devotedness and gratitude. They have expressed, at the same time, the admiration of the people for the courage of their monarch, and their wish to see associated with the destinies of France the men who, at various periods during the last twenty-five years, have defended the national glory and liberty. This would be a salutary association ; it would unite all opinions, efface the last vestiges of conflicting parties, and surround the constitutional king with his real supporters ; those, who in 1789 wished to see liberty flourish under the monarchy, and those, who in 1815 wish to consolidate the monarchy on the basis of liberty. The bulwarks of government are the men who explain the motives for which they defend them. Those who merely wish to serve despotism pass from one government to another, certain of being employed as tools under any new order of things ; but those who love liberty perish round the throne by which it is protected.

“ Now, when all our apprehensions are re-

moved ; when we are happy and proud of the dignity, courage, and sincerity of our monarch, let us redouble our efforts against the enemy of France, against the enemy of mankind. Louis XVIII, by manifesting a confidence worthy of the King of France towards his subjects, instead of surrounding himself by suspicious precautions, seizes the moment of danger to augment the liberty of the constitution by which we are governed. Supported on that firm basis, the only one which now-a-days can give strength and duration to governments, he relies on our zeal and patriotism, on that courage which has been tried by Europe, and which will be its eternal admiration. All our interests are at stake ; our wives, children, property, liberty, industry, opinions, nay our very words and thoughts. The man who threatens us laid his grasp on every thing. The hands that tilled our ground were employed in war, the population of our commercial cities was drained. He dragged to the extremities of the world, the flower of our youth, and abandoned them to the horrors of famine and the rigours of ungenial climates. To gratify his ambition, twelve hundred thousand brave men perished in a foreign land, without food or consolation, deserted by him whom they had defended with their dying hands. He now returns to deprive us of all that we yet possess.

The wealth of the world is no longer his, and we ourselves shall become the objects of his rapacity. His appearance, which is to us the renewal of every misfortune, is a signal of war to Europe. Nations are alarmed, governments dismayed. The sovereigns who became our allies by his abdication feel with regret the necessity of again becoming our enemies. No nation can rely upon his word, and, if he governs us, no nation can remain at peace with France.

“ On the side of the king we have constitutional liberty, security and peace; and on the side of Bonaparte, slavery, anarchy, and war. Under Louis XVIII we enjoy a representative government; we govern ourselves. Under Bonaparte we should have a Mameluke government. His sword would be our law. Here I may be permitted to point out an error, which, doubtless, would have had no effect on intrepid and courageous hearts, though it might have made irresolute spirits and vulgar minds waver. Something has been said in our journals about the promised clemency of Bonaparte; but no such promise exists. I have read the proclamations of the tyrant who now attempts to recover the sceptre that was wrested from him, but they contain no mention of clemency or amnesty any more than of constitution or liberty. A few disdainful allusions respecting the writings

which have appeared since the 31st of March, seem, it is true, to offer the guarantee of contempt to those who have attacked and overthrown tyranny. But the words contain no engagement: they leave the field open to revenge.

“ The proclamations of Bonaparte are not those of a prince who believes he has a claim to the throne. They are not those of a factious demagogue who is endeavouring to mislead a nation by false visions of liberty : they are the proclamations of an armed chief, who brandishes his sabre to excite the avidity of his satellites, and to instigate them to make a prey of peaceful subjects. He is an Attila, he is a Gengis-Khan, but the more fearful and odious inasmuch as he has at his command the resources of civilization, of which he is availing himself to systematize and direct massacre and pillage. He does not disguise his projects, he despises us too completely to attempt to seduce us.

“ And what people would better deserve to be despised if we submitted to his chains ! After having been the terror of Europe, we should become its laughing-stock were we to take back a master whom we have ourselves covered with opprobrium. A year ago we might have said we were blinded with enthusiasm, or deceived by artifice ; but now we have proclaimed that our

eyes are opened and that we detest the yoke of the tyrant. We should be submitting to that hateful yoke, in defiance of our known and declared wish, a thousand times repeated; we should be acknowledging ourselves a nation of slaves; our slavery would be without excuse and our degradation without bounds.

“ And what shall we say to the king whom we voluntarily recalled, for the allied powers respected the independence of the national will; to that king whom we spontaneously invited to the land where his family had so cruelly suffered? Shall we say to him: ‘ You put faith in the French people; we rendered homage to you, and, confiding in our oaths, you quitted your asylum and came amongst us alone and unarmed. Whilst no danger threatened, whilst you dispensed favours and possessed power, an immense population stunned you with their tumultuous acclamations: you have not abused their enthusiasm. If your ministers have committed many faults, you have been noble, good, and wise. A whole year of your reign has not cost us so many tears as a single day of Bonaparte’s.

“ ‘ But the man who has waded in our blood re-appears on the French territory; he who was so lately pursued by our unanimous maledictions. He shews himself, he threatens: our oaths no longer bind us; your virtues and con-

fidence are no check upon us; age does not inspire us with respect. You thought you had returned to a gallant nation, but you find only a herd of perjured slaves.'

" No, such shall not be our language, such at least, shall not be mine. I have wished for liberty under various forms of government. I have seen that it was possible to secure liberty under the monarchy. I see the king rally with the nation. I will not become a miserable renegade, abandoning one power to join another, screening infamy by sophistry and stammering out profane excuses to purchase a disgraceful life.

" But such is not the fate that awaits us. The heroes who for five and twenty years have fought for the glory of France will not become the instruments of national shame. They will not sell the country which admires and loves them. They have been deceived for a moment, but they will return to the French flag. They regret the errors of which they have been the victims and they see those errors atoned for. Their guides are their old chiefs and their brothers in arms. Those who have led them so often to victory and who best know their merits, will help the sovereign to reward them. The error of a day must be forgotten: they are perhaps unconscious of their own faults and the nation

will remember only their admirable valour and immortal renown.

“ BENJAMIN DE CONSTANT.”

On the 20th of April, one month after the publication of the above article, its author accepted from Napoleon the office of counsellor of state. Truly M. Benjamin de Constant is the most inconstant of men !

CHAPTER XI.

Royal sitting.—The king's speech.—Monsieur's oath.—Ney's defection.—Fouché.—My visit to Carnot.—Our conversation.—The 19th of March.—Melancholy news.—My despair.

IN the mean time, all means were adopted at the palace to gain over the people to the royalist cause. Monsieur, however, was suspected of not partaking in the constitutional sentiments of the king, and he was accused of being no great friend to the charter, which his august brother had granted. Indeed, the persons about Monsieur spoke slightly of that fundamental compact, and their conduct, on many occasions, accorded with their words. But Monsieur was

ignorant of all this ; he was sincerely attached to the new institutions of his country, and he proved himself to be so, by restoring to us, on his accession to the throne, what the speakers on the left side of the chamber denominate the most vital of our liberties.

Louis XVIII perceived the necessity of undeceiving the public on this point, and of shewing that Monsieur, as well as the Duke of Berri, entertained no sentiments contrary to his own. This suggested the idea of the royal sitting, of which so much was said, and so much expected, which was the source of so many sentimental tears, but which, in the end, produced such trivial effects. On the 16th of March, the two chambers were convoked for a solemn sitting, at the palace of the legislative body. The king came to the assembly in full state. The procession was followed by several detachments of the national-guards, troops of the line, and other corps of the army, and of the military household. The streets were lined with different corps of cavalry and infantry. Notwithstanding a tremendous fall of rain, an immense concourse of people collected to see the king.

The hall was not less crowded than the streets. Not only the galleries, but the four first rows of benches, were filled with people. On the lower steps to the right of the throne stood the peers,

on the left the deputies; on each side of the throne were stationed a national-guard, a body-guard, and a soldier of the line. About four o'clock a flourish of drums and trumpets from the bands of the different regiments, a discharge of artillery, and reiterated acclamations, announced the arrival of the king. A deputation of the two chambers, the ushers, the state messengers, the heralds at arms, the officers of the household, and the princes of the royal family, preceded his majesty, who advanced supported by the Duke de Duras and the Count de Blacas: surely at that critical period he might have found more worthy and more firm supporters. While the ladies waved their white handkerchiefs, in token of their affection and loyalty; while the peers and the deputies expressed their transports by joyful exclamations; the king took his seat upon the throne. In observance of the usual ceremony, the king requested the peers to be seated, and the chancellor communicated the same invitation to the deputies. On the right of the king sat Monsieur and the Duke of Orleans: on the left the Duke of Berri and the Prince of Condé. Silence having been restored, the king put on his hat, then took it off to salute the assembly, and, having put it on a second time, delivered in a firm and sonorous voice the following speech:

“ Gentlemen, at the present moment, when the critical event which has occurred in one part of my kingdom threatens the liberty of all the rest, I come among you to strengthen those ties which, by uniting you to me, constitute the strength of the State. By addressing myself to you I shall explain to France the sentiments which animate me.

“ I have returned to my country: I have reconciled her with all foreign powers, who, you may rely on it, will be faithful to the treaties which have restored to us the blessings of peace.

“ I have laboured for the happiness of my people; I have received, and am daily receiving the most touching proofs of their affection. Can I do better at sixty years of age, than die in their defence?”

Here his majesty was interrupted by unanimous acclamations. The king, affected by these transports, resumed his speech, with much emotion.

“ I fear not for myself; all my fears are for France. He who comes among us, to rekindle the torch of civil discord brings with him also the scourge of foreign war. He comes to subject our country to his own yoke. He comes, too, to destroy that constitutional charter which I have given you; that charter which is my best title to glory in the eyes of posterity, which all

Frenchmen cherish, and which I swear to maintain.

“ Let it then be our sacred standard. The descendants of Henry IV will be the first to rally round it; and their example will be followed by all good Frenchmen. Finally, gentlemen, let the two chambers grant to government the necessary power, and this truly national war will prove, by its prosperity, what may be effected by a great people, united by the love of their sovereign and the fundamental law of the State.”

The impression, which this speech produced, surpassed all our expectations. The sitting was now about to break up, when Monsieur was observed to rise and advance towards the king, as if for the purpose of speaking to him. Silence being restored, Monsieur respectfully saluted his brother, and addressed him in nearly the following words :

“ Sire, I am aware that I depart from the ordinary rules, in speaking in the presence of your Majesty; but I entreat that you will excuse me, and permit me to declare here, in the name of myself and of my family, how sincerely we share the sentiments, which animate your Majesty.”

Then turning towards the assembly, Monsieur added, raising his hand :

“ Let us swear, by our honour, to live and die

faithful to our king and the constitutional charter, which ensures the happiness of France."

On hearing these words, the whole assembly spontaneously rose, and repeated with the prince, the oath to die for the king and the charter. Louis XVIII, deeply moved, presented his hand to Monsieur, who seized and kissed it with transport. The king, unable to control his feelings, clasped his royal highness in his arms, with the dignity of a monarch, and the tenderness of a brother. This spectacle created a lively feeling of interest in the spectators. The eyes of all present were filled with tears, and it was not until the royal retinue prepared to withdraw, that the acclamations, which had been suspended by a pleasing emotion, burst forth with new force.

On the same evening, as soon as Louis XVIII saw me, he questioned me respecting the effect which his speech had produced. I answered that it was prodigiously admired, adding that the best results were expected from the sitting and above all from the solemn declaration of his august brother.

"Heaven grant," said the king, "that it has not been made too late! My brother has placed too much confidence in men, who are not so well-intentioned as himself. Had he believed me at first, he would not have been obliged to take the oath he has pronounced to-day."

I then inquired the news of the army: it was bad.

“Our only resource,” said Louis XVIII, is Marshal Ney. He has in his hands the destiny of France. He has a great game to play: he may lose or gain a noble stake.”

“He will be faithful, Sire; I am sure he will!” I exclaimed.

“I hope so,” added the king, “if he be not, there is no such thing as honour in the world.”

It was in the evening of the 16th that Louis XVIII said this. On the morning, of the 17th, when I was again with his majesty, the minister of war entered with the fatal dispatches in his hand. His countenance was pale and his eyes full of tears. “Sire,” said he, “if every thing depended upon one man, as surely it does not, all would be lost. Marshal Ney has broken his oath; he has himself proclaimed Napoleon, amidst the acclamations of his troops.”

“Oh! the wretch!” exclaimed the king, clasping his hands. “This indeed is a disgrace to human nature!”

Louis XVIII was confounded; I, too, was choaking with grief, but I concealed my emotion, lest I should encrease that of the king. Presently some words of hope, uttered by the Duke of Feltre, (who doubtless placed no faith in them himself,) the enthusiasm of the crowd,

who thronged the garden of the Tuileries, and the shouts of affection, a thousand times repeated, diverted the gloomy presentiments, which the fatal news had created.

Some persons shewed a wish to check the progress of the revolution by the aid of the revolutionists. They imagined that two men, Carnot and Fouché, who thought they had struck a death-blow at the monarchy in the person of Louis XVI, could alone arrest the torrent, which threatened to annihilate for ever the descendants of Henry IV. One of our princes undertook the task of seeing Fouché, not at the Tuileries, for Fouché never dared to set foot there, but at the house of a third person, viz. that of the Princess de Vaudemont. His royal highness, surmounting the horror which an interview with such a man must naturally have created, went so far as to beg that he would sincerely join the royalist cause. Fouché met every proposition by a declaration of what he called his want of power. He, however, promised to employ himself usefully for the king's interests at a future period.

Louis XVIII directed me to see Carnot. I was furnished with full powers. I accordingly wrote to Carnot to request an interview with him at his house; which he, with his usual gallantry, immediately granted. My visit though ex-

pected, seemed to surprise him. I told him, that if he would sincerely devote himself to the royalist cause, he would at once receive an appointment.

“And under what title?” inquired he, “as a conventionalist, as a member of the directory, or as a general of the empire? In what light will the royal family look upon the man whom they call a regicide?”

“The past will be forgotten; your great talents and your attachment to your country will alone be borne in mind. Liberty is dear to you; the charter guarantees all possible freedom. Would you prefer to serve the despot Napoleon? Will the republican Carnot consent to become the chamberlain of the emperor?”

“No, no,” replied Carnot smiling, “rest assured that I will never be the chamberlain of any one; such a character would not suit me. But, on the other hand, I dislike the Bourbons, and I never wish to have any thing to say to the Duchess of Angoulême.”

These words convinced me that if Carnot did not wish to be reconciled to the Bourbons, that disinclination arose, if not from remorse, at least from a feeling of delicacy. I endeavoured to shake his resolution, but all my efforts were in vain, and I left him, with regret at having uselessly undertaken a task, which had

its humiliating point of view. This took place on the evening of the 18th of March.

The 19th was a day of sorrow and the eve of a fatal day. I went to the king who had just returned from a review at the Champ-de-Mars; he appeared pleased; I communicated to him the ill-success of my visit; at which he evinced no disappointment. I was astonished at his good spirits; "I have news for you," said his majesty, "Ney abandons Bonaparte; our cause is gained." Scarcely had the king uttered these words, when the Count de Damas entered, followed by several courtiers. He was pale, his lips were even livid, and he tottered rather than walked. Although I had no liking for him, yet his apparent distress moved my pity. "Sire," said he, in a voice stifled with grief, "all is lost. Your majesty is betrayed by your army. You must instantly quit Paris." At these words the king, casting a look of sadness on all present, said: "Well! the tree bears its fruit, you wished me to reign for you; but henceforth I will reign for no one. If I return a second time to the throne of my fathers, I shall know how to profit by experience."

Every one was silent; as for me, I wept, and sobbed aloud.

"Adieu!" said the king to me, "you must leave this palace. Be not thus cast down. You have gained my friendship, and you shall always have

it." I would have thrown myself at the feet of his majesty ; but I swooned at that moment. When I recovered I found myself at home, and in bed, and it seemed an age since I had parted from Louis XVIII.

CHAPTER XII.

The Duke of Orleans at the Tuileries.—A council.—The king's departure.—M. de Bourrienne.—Insolence of Fouché.—The 20th of March.—Fire at the Tuileries.—M. de Lavalette.—Rejoicings at the Place du Carrousel.—General Excelmans.—Arrival of Bonaparte.

I HAVE read, in accounts of shipwrecks, that seamen, when all hope of deliverance is extinct, sometimes exhaust their last remnant of energy in reproaching each other for the loss of the ship. Such was, at this critical moment, the conduct of those who had compromised the safety of the State. The ministers, now seeing the effects of their mad presumption, threw the blame of their errors and stupidity on one another. In their terror, disclosures of a fearful nature escaped them. In the midst of these debates, the king, absorbed in grief, preserved profound silence. At length he sent a messenger for

the Duke of Orleans, to whom he wished to communicate his intentions. The unjust suspicions of the court against the Duke of Orleans were removed by his noble sincerity on this occasion. As soon as the duke was made acquainted with the king's design, he declared himself equally ready to share the bad or good fortune of his sovereign.

A council was held to determine in what direction the royal family should retire. Two courses were open, either to take a position in the South, with the power of retiring upon Spain, — or to go to Rochelle, a strong garrison, protected by the formidable district of La Vendée. On the one hand, the fidelity of the inhabitants of Languedoc, Gascony, and Provence, could not be doubted; there was every expectation that the three great provinces, bounding Spain and Piedmont, would make the greatest efforts to repay the confidence of their monarch; and that, reinforced by foreign aid, they would advantageously oppose the partisans of Bonaparte. On the other hand, Rochelle presented immense resources; its port afforded every facility of communication with England, and it was certain that the king's presence in that town would have caused a levy in mass of the people of Brittany, Poitou, and La Vendée. But whichever of these two courses was to be adopted, every

courtier must have unsheathed his sword, and have become a soldier. Had Louis XVIII possessed the youth and health of Henry IV, there is no doubt but he might have inspired others with the courage with which he himself was animated; but he was old and infirm. The persons about him, who had never been engaged in military service, were alarmed at the thought of war, and were very willing that foreigners should fight their battles for them. As the king said nothing, it was resolved to proceed—not to Brittany or Languedoc—but to the Netherlands.

During the whole of this night of anguish, my brother did nothing but go backward and forward, between my house and the Tuileries; so that I was constantly informed of every thing that was going on. He set out on his last visit to the palace, at a quarter to nine o'clock. He did not return till half past ten, when he brought me melancholy news. After having signed an admirable protest and the ordinance for dissolving the two chambers, the king had just set off, escorted by Monsieur and the Duke of Berri, who followed him on horseback. My brother did not accompany him; for in the Netherlands he could only aid the monarchy by his advice, while in Languedoc he could defend it with his sword. He accordingly departed in all haste for Toulouse, where the

Duke of Angoulême had established his headquarters. I, for my part, hastily made every necessary preparation—not to fight, for I am no amazon—but to follow the king in his exile.

Alas! even before his departure, the king had been cruelly abandoned by persons whom he had honoured with his confidence! It was already considered an absurdity to shew attachment and fidelity to him. This is no exaggeration. Who, for example would believe that, on the 19th of March, M. de Bourrienne, the prefect of police, dared to issue the following document in the shape of an official proclamation: “In conformity with the order of the day, published on the 15th of this month, a patrol of the national guard last night arrested in the garden of the Palais Royal two men, who repeatedly cried *Vive le Roi!* and whose object was to produce that dangerous excitement which leads to riot and to civil war.”

These few lines shew better than whole volumes the character of the public functionaries of the period. They also prove that Bonaparte, whom M. Bourrienne accuses of committing solecisms in grammar, knew mankind very well, and that he was not far wrong, when he said to his secretary: “Bourrienne, my friend, you are but

a simpleton.”* It will be recollected in what consternation the imperial regency shifted its quarters in 1814. It would seem that the same system was employed by the Bonapartists to get the royal family out of the Tuileries.

Will it be believed that the king's departure was hastened by the following note, which Fouché addressed to the Duke d'Aumont on the 19th of March: “ There is not a moment to lose. Bonaparte will be in Paris to-morrow. His design is to detain Louis XVIII, and the princes and princesses of the royal family, as hostages, in the hope of securing tranquillity at home, and averting the danger he apprehends from foreign powers. *I have this on good authority.* Do not trust to the hope of an impossible resistance. Every measure is taken to paralyse great efforts : save the king, and I will answer for the monarchy.”

These last words, not less criminal than insolent, were approved and commended by the herd of courtiers, who, from that moment, began to regard the regicide Fouché as the protector

* The Memoirs of M. de Bourrienne plainly shew, that Napoleon did not rigourously observe the code of politeness in speaking to his secretary. I must compliment M. de Bourrienne on these volumes ; I did not think him capable of producing so interesting a work.

of the monarchy. But to return to my own affairs.

What a long night was that of the 19th of March! As the shades of evening advanced, the gloomy and anxious thoughts that oppressed my mind seemed to augment. I impatiently awaited the coming day, looking from my window every minute to catch the first glimpse of the morning light. I held in my hand a portrait of the king. I pressed it to my heart and covered it with kisses, with a sentiment resembling love. At length the much wished-for day arrived, and I went out to see Paris on the 20th of March.

I expected that all would be tumult and confusion; but on the contrary, the streets and also the quays were silent, and almost deserted. On the Pont Royal, as usual, a few persons were passing to and fro. It may naturally be supposed that I at once directed my course to the Tuileries. Having gained the court yard I looked mechanically towards the place, where the white flag had waved on the preceding day. It was no longer there; the monarchy had fallen and its standard had disappeared. I advanced to the gate of the palace, and through the railings I questioned some of the national guards, who were then on duty. They informed me, that on the preceding evening, the king, having

determined to quit Paris, left his apartment preceded by a single usher bearing flambeaux, and supported by MM. de Blacas and de Duras : awed by his venerable aspect two of the national guards fell on their knees before him ; and the king expressed his gratitude for their fidelity. These particulars, melancholy as they were, were gratifying to me. I drank deeply of my cup of sorrow.

As the morning advanced, the Carrousel gradually filled with the partisans of Bonaparte as well as the adherents of the Bourbons. The crowd thronged on all sides. People looked at each other with suspicion, and seemed afraid to speak above their breath. Universal silence prevailed. Suddenly an alarm was given that the Tuileries was on fire ; and a thick cloud of smoke was seen rising above the building. I gazed on the spectacle in mournful silence ; for a moment, I thought that the faithful followers of the king had set fire to the palace, to prevent its being a second time profaned by the imperial usurper, who had already occupied it too long ; but I soon learned the truth. It was merely a chimney on fire. The accident was occasioned by Louis XVIII having ordered some important papers to be burnt, which he did not wish to be seen. The fire was easily extinguished in a few moments.

After leaving the Carrousel, I found myself, I scarcely knew how, in the Rue Saint-Honoré. Here the shops were half open and the goods not displayed, as if it had been a holiday or a day of mourning. About 9 o'clock, seeing a number of people hurrying through the Rue de Grenelle Saint-Honoré, in the direction of the Rue de Jean Jacques Rousseau, I followed them. I soon reached the Hotel des Postes, at which a carriage had just stopped. A gentleman superbly dressed alighted from it. He was Count de Lavalette, who had resumed his official costume, and who came, in the name of the emperor, to take possession of the post-office. He politely told Count Ferrand that he came to supersede him, not to turn him out. To which the Count answered: "I will soon leave the field open to you, Sir. All I wish is, to take away with me the king's portrait. Every thing else belongs to the business of the office." Count Lavalette wrote to acquaint his master with the result of this interview. He withdrew from the letter boxes all journals containing the king's proclamations, etc. and dispatched to the different post masters in the departments, a circular, couched in the following terms:

"Paris, March 20th.

"Half past 8 in the evening.

"The Emperor will be in Paris in two hours

and perhaps sooner. The capital is in the greatest enthusiasm. All is tranquil, and all attempts to excite civil discord will prove abortive.

“VIVE L'EMPEREUR!”

I went home to get a few hours' rest, and then returned to the Place du Carrousel. It was filled with an immense concourse of disorderly persons, male and female, singing the songs which were popular at the beginning of the revolution, and dancing in honour of the emperor's return. Disgusted at these saturnalia, I was directing my course to the Pont Royal, when I saw an officer with a tricoloured flag in his hand galloping at full speed towards the Tuileries. This was General Excelmans. He was accompanied by several other officers. On arriving at the palace, he requested admittance, which being granted, he entered and himself placed the tricoloured flag on the platform of the marshals' hall. Several of the old republicans, who were present, expected that the republic would be proclaimed at that moment; but their leaders dared not give the fatal signal. The emperor's good fortune was triumphant. I heard a jacobin near me, say to Count Dubois-Dubourg in the language of 93: “The cowards are afraid! Well! let them swallow the sword of despotism to the very hilt.”

The tumultuous mob of dancers and singers increased every moment. By order of the Duchess of Saint-Leu, wine and liquors were distributed among them. Of course, nothing could be better calculated to stimulate their enthusiasm. The emperor's appearance was momentarily looked for. Several corps of his army had entered Paris. The grand dignitaries of the empire and the grand officers of the crown were rapidly superseding each other; and at eight in the evening Bonaparte himself arrived.

He entered the palace of Louis XVIII like a robber or a night-bird; but all allusions of this kind were now turned against the unfortunate. A few days afterwards there was published at Martinet's a vile caricature representing turkeys flying in terror through the gates of the Tuileries, while the windows were thrown open to receive the eagle.

CHAPTER XIII.

Recapitulation of the military revolution of the 20th of March.—Landing of Napoleon at Cannes.—His address to the royalist troops.—He enters Grenoble.—M. de Beranger.—The Duke of Angoulême in the South.—Provisional government at Toulouse.—Count de Damas-Crux.—M. de Villeneuve and other gentlemen of Toulouse.—Count de Castellane.—Marshal Perignon.—General Laborde.—Count Saint-Aulaire.—Curious note on M. de Villèle.—Madame Royale at Bordeaux.

THUS, while the sovereigns at the Congress of Vienna were dividing the spoil of France among themselves, Napoleon, seated on his rock at the Isle of Elba, was watching the favourable moment to recover the sceptre which had fallen from his hands. The abdication of Fontainebleau had deceived the world. It was believed that Napoleon, satiated with glory and disgusted with power, wished to enjoy repose, and that, after having revolutionized the world, he was willing to die in peace. But no such thing. Bonaparte was not one of those lofty-minded men, who can relinquish power without an effort, and lose a crown without regret. A court, a palace, millions of subjects, armies to command, and sovereigns to tremble at his feet,

were things indispensable to his existence. The petty sovereignty of the Isle of Elba could not satisfy his restless activity of mind; and in his exile he profited by the imprudence of the restored government, to revive the attachment which the army had once entertained towards him, and to shake the fidelity of the public functionaries.

The republicans now joined the Bonapartists. Those incorrigible men, who for twenty years have pursued their chimera of liberty with inconceivable obstinacy, and have taken part in every conspiracy against established governments, hoped that a revolution would afford some chance for their beloved republic. They now rallied with the Bonapartists only to assist in overthrowing the monarchy of the Bourbons. The Bonapartists gladly accepted the services of their new allies, and thus we had two formidable enemies to contend against, independently of the faults of our own party.

Such was the state of things when, on the night of the 25th of February, the Emperor Napoleon set sail from the Isle of Elba. As on his return from Egypt, he escaped almost by a miracle from the English cruizers, which were stationed near the Island; and at three o'clock on the morning of the 1st of March, the fragile bark, which brought so many disasters and calamities to France, and so many fears and troubles to all

Europe, arrived at Cannes, in the gulf of Juan on the coast of Provence. Napoleon was the first who stepped on shore. I have been told by one of the persons who accompanied him on his voyage, that, on setting foot on the soil of his old empire, an involuntary feeling of fear caused him suddenly to draw his sword.

The first event which marked the arrival of Bonaparte, was the capture of the Prince of Monaco, who was taken, I know not how, in the advanced posts of his little army. However, the town of Antibes had closed its gates. Bonaparte hastily took the direction of Dauphiné. He had marched for five days, not a little alarmed at the dead silence which every where prevailed as he advanced. No re-inforcement had yet joined the eight hundred men whom he had brought with him. It was on the 7th of March that, near a little village called La Frète a royal detachment attempted to oppose him. "I have been deceived," said he to Bertrand, "but no matter, march on!" Then advancing alone, he said, addressing the royalist troops: "My friends, do you not recognize me? I am your Emperor. If any soldier among you will kill his general, let him strike now!" These words were irresistible; from that moment the royal cause was lost, and the exile of the Isle of Elba once more became master of France.

In the evening Bonaparte reached Grenoble. There he resumed the character of emperor, and re-established about his person the etiquette of the Tuileries. His court did not want attendants. The bishop, in pontifical robes, followed by all his clergy, the royal court, and the tribunal of the first instance, came to pay their respects to Napoleon ; but these were the courtiers of fear rather than of glory. One man only ventured to speak out courageously and frankly. The new sovereign wished the members of his tribunal of the first instance to employ the influence of their magisterial functions in favour of the imperial government, upon which M. de Beranger, to the no small astonishment of Napoleon, said, " Sire, that influence is null."

" Why, Sir?"

" Because, in the imperial system, the judicial authority is subordinate to the administrative authority, and the influence of the magistrates arises out of the independence and extent of the power granted to them by the government."

On hearing this, the new monarch was not less embarrassed than enraged. However, he could not compromise his character of a converted despot and a liberal sovereign.

From Grenoble, Bonaparte marched upon

Lyons. His proclamations, which were profusely circulated in the districts through which he passed, filled all hearts with enthusiasm for his cause. These proclamations were, indeed, master-pieces of popular eloquence; they were artfully interwoven with promises of future liberty, bitter animadversions on the royal government, and recollections of our old military glory; and they were couched in that bold, vigorous, figurative style, in which the general of the army of Egypt was wont to address his troops at the foot of the Pyramids. Certainly I cannot be suspected of partiality to Bonaparte; but I never read, without admiration, the manifesto he addressed to his old army, in which, denouncing the treachery of Augereau and Marmont, as if to justify his fortune, he describes victory marching to the charge, and the eagle with the national colours flying from steeple to steeple until it perches on the towers of Notre-Dame.

Monsieur and the Duke of Orleans, seconded by Marshal Macdonald, had put Lyons in a state of defence; but the people, the troops and the national guards all joined Napoleon with inconceivable ardour. The princes were deserted, and only two hours before the invader entered the city they left it, overwhelmed with despair, to announce to his majesty that his kingdom was lost.

A single national guard formed Monsieur's escort.

Napoleon, now master of the second city in France, published a dozen decrees to annihilate every thing that Louis XVIII had done since his restoration: the charter, the two chambers, the royal appointments, the military household of the king; nothing was spared. A decree of proscription was issued against thirteen individuals. At the head of the list appeared the Prince of Benevento, which was perfectly just, and Marmont Duke of Ragusa, who certainly deserved this memorial on the part of his old master. The other outlaws were the Duke of Dalberg, the Abbé de Montesquiou, the Counts de Jaucourt and de Beurnouville (who had been members of the provisional government conjointly with Talleyrand); Count Lynch, Mayor of Bordeaux; Count Alexis de Noailles, Baron de Vitrolles, the heroic Marquis de La Rochejaquelin, M. Bellart, M. de Bourrienne, who was but ill rewarded for the little proclamation I quoted in my last chapter, and poor Sosthène de La Rochefoucauld, who was even more astonished than we were that he was thought worthy of being put on the list of the proscribed.

At length Bonaparte entered Paris without a gun being fired in defence of royalty.

La Vendée, surprised by this incredible revo-

lution, protested with its usual loyalty against the return of the usurper. But General Canuel* was neither a Charette nor a Cathelineau, neither a Lescure nor a La Rochejaquelin. A suspension of arms was concluded, before the battle of Waterloo, between the Vendéans of 1815 and General Travot.

The South of France, excited by the presence of the Duke of Angoulême and that of his heroic duchess, prepared to make a courageous defence of the royal cause, which had been so basely betrayed.

The duke and duchess were at Bordeaux when they heard of the landing of Bonaparte. His royal highness immediately received, from the king, his uncle, orders to repair in all haste to Toulouse, there to establish a provisional government, which was to extend over Provence, Dauphiné, Languedoc and the provinces situated between the Loire, the sea, the Garonne and the Guyenne. The duke suddenly left the magnificent *fêtes* which had been prepared for him in the city of Bordeaux and arrived at Toulouse accompanied by Count de Damas-Crux, Baron de Damas, and Viscount de Bruges.

• His royal highness trusted in a great measure to M. de Damas-Crux for the organization of the

* M. Canuel has at least given General Lamarque an opportunity of writing on this campaign a pamphlet worthy of the memoirs of Beaumarchais.

sort of provisional government to be established at Toulouse. Unfortunately, poor M. de Damas-Crux was more remarkable for good intention, than for talent. His noble name was most provokingly parodied by a change of its termination. This joke, which amused the people, greatly vexed the count, who had not sufficient strength of mind to regard it with contempt.

The head of the provisional government did not want for counsellors. He was soon surrounded by a crowd of noblemen of that part of the country, who came to offer the tribute of their devotedness in the hope of serving their own interests, while they supported the king's. Toulouse seems to have an inexhaustible stock of men of this class, for, in spite of the numbers who flock to Paris, the city still keeps a good supply to herself. Among the official counsellors of M. de Damas-Crux the most conspicuous was the Marquis François Villeneuve de Villeneuve ; he was a sort of provincial genius, one of those men who enjoy a certain reputation in their own particular districts. The marquis had so long and so confidently boasted of his noble birth, and his political talent, that no one ventured to doubt either the one or the other. However, experience has shewn that with regard to the talent at least, it was not quite right to take the Marquis François Villeneuve de Villeneuve on his own word. The Count de Damas-Crux

himself soon discovered that the marquis was good for nothing, and this truth became more and more evident in proportion as he took an active part in public affairs. After the hundred days, he obtained an appointment; but the government of that period, which certainly was not scrupulously nice about the capacity of the persons it employed, found it necessary to dismiss him.

Next to the Marquis de Villeneuve was the Chevalier de Rigaud, an intrepid officer who would joyfully have laid down his life for the Bourbons, but whose devotedness did not qualify him for giving reasonable advice; and M. de Limayrac, sub-prefect of Toulouse, who was remarkable for nothing but an exceedingly fine voice. Had he possessed talent and enthusiasm, he would have been an excellent orator. The Marquis de Chalvet was a respectable nobleman, who would have chosen to live in easy retirement, but who pushed himself forward in compliance with the wish of his cousin, the Marchioness d'Hargicourt. That lady was absolutely determined, that one member of her family should gain distinction in the royal cause. Her husband she thought was too old for politics, and she cast her eyes on M. de Chalvet, who would gladly have dispensed with the honour. The national guard was commanded by Count d'Hargicourt, who was remarkable for his agreeable conversa-

tion, and gallant manners towards ladies. The Mac-Karti family supplied the royalist party with some able men, resolute, and above all ambitious. But the wisest and most intellectual of all was the Marquis de Castellane. Unfortunately he kept himself aloof, and although he wished success to the royal cause, he gave himself no great trouble to promote its triumph. M. de Bar's journal, from which I borrow all these details, contains, under the date of the 27th of March, the following passage which I transcribe literally, because it concerns a personage who has since played so great a part in the political world :

“ I saw M. de Villele to-day, who made me a present of a pamphlet which he has lately published. It is neither well written, nor well conceived ; its object is to attack the new form of government, which Louis XVIII established on returning to this kingdom. It would not, I think, be difficult to find better arguments than those advanced by M. de Villele, and above all to employ them with greater talent and moderation. The perusal of this work has very much lessened the good opinion I had formed of M. de Villele : though I still consider him an adroit and intelligent man, who is not appreciated as he deserves to be in this country. I suspect that he guessed the cause of my visit to Toulouse, and

thus I account for the attention and politeness he shewed me. On taking leave of me he dropped some words, which seemed to indicate projects of ambition, for which doubtless he would wish to secure my support. That, however, he is not very likely to obtain. He has lived for a long time in retirement, at his country seat, where he has made some great agricultural improvements. He has invited me to spend a day with him, which I agreed to do, though I have an absolute antipathy to Madame de Villele whose provincial pride is, however, her only fault."

But to return to M. Damas-Crux. Amidst all these Toulousians, whose zeal for the royal cause increased their natural petulance, and who all wished to direct the provisional government their own way, the Duke of Angoulême would have been tormented to death, had he not been supported by the Baron de Vitrolles. The baron pledged himself to set all right, provided he was allowed to do as he pleased. M. de Damas-Crux wished for nothing better, and he said with the most diverting *naïveté*, "Arrange every thing, baron: you draw up the orders and I will sign them."

There were at Toulouse some other persons attached to the royalist party, who, either from luke-warmness of affection for the Bourbon

family, or some other cause, made themselves less conspicuous than the persons above noticed, and for this reason I have not confounded them together. These individuals were Marshal Perignon, whose ardour of feeling had been chilled by age, but who was still respected as a glorious memento of the past; General de Laborde, a distinguished officer, and a clever diplomatist, who, having just obtained the settlement of a pension of 10,000 francs, was desirous of keeping on good terms with the government, who might have to pay him. Next came General Cassagne, an old soldier, who for the moment was a faithful follower of Louis XVIII, and who would soon become an equally faithful follower of Bonaparte, because, in his estimation, the legitimate sovereign was he who occupied the Tuileries. The general was a true model of those docile military men who, in 1813 and 1815, changed their political sentiments four different times, as readily as they changed their cockades and uniform buttons. Finally, there was M. de St. Aulaire, the prefect of the department. He was one of those old nobles who had allowed themselves to be seduced by the splendour of the imperial government and who had rallied round Bonaparte. As a prefect of Louis XVIII, he had no thoughts of betraying his new master; but his old master still possessed some share of his affection. He

served the royal cause like a man who did not wish it success. In his heart, he was favourable to Napoleon, a fact which appeared evident in the proclamation he addressed to the Toulousians on quitting the prefecture. After the second return of the king, M. de St. Aulaire again entered the service of government, and, notwithstanding his Bonaparteian sentiments in 1815, I believe him now to be sincerely devoted to the Bourbon family. He is a man who, in great, as well as in little matters, conducts himself with tact and propriety. He followed the current of events; but since the last overthrow of Napoleon he has completely forgotten the traditions of the empire.

To these men, clever without devotedness, or devoted without talent, were confided the last hopes of royalty. It was expected that they would assemble round the white flag all the faithful servants of our princes in the South of France. It was not easy, I confess, to ensure the triumph of that noble cause, but they might at least have shown themselves worthy to defend it.

Alas! paltry jealousies sprang up to embarrass the tottering steps of the provisional government. This distressed the hearts of all the good royalists of the South. Their only consolation was to reflect, that the best combined and most ener-

getic measures would still have been useless. The wonderful star of Bonaparte, to which all Europe had bowed the head, resumed for awhile its irresistible ascendancy. Madame Royale, herself, the heroic grand-daughter of Maria Theresa, vainly endeavoured to oppose it. She could neither keep the inhabitants of Bordeaux within the bounds of duty, nor induce the army to listen to the voice of honour and fidelity. In vain did the princess display the most intrepid courage. But no ; it was not in vain, for France thereby learnt to appreciate the character of the noble princess, and to see how worthy she is to fill the throne, which she is one day destined to occupy. On quitting Bordeaux she carried with her the admiration of the French people, and when she was restored to us, our enthusiasm sufficiently proved, that at length we knew how to render homage to her noble virtues, of which for a moment we had shown ourselves unworthy.

CHAPTER XIV.

Dissolution of the provisional government.—Arrest of M. de Vitrolles.—The Duke de Damas-Cruz.—Noble conduct of Marshal Perignon.—General Gilly's treason.—Arrest of the Duke of Angoulême.—Count Grouchy.—Anecdote.—Carnot and Fouché.—The Duke of Gaëta.—The Duke de Decrès.—Count Mollien.—The Duke of Bassano.—The Duke of Vicenza.—The Duke of Rovigo's disappointment.—His visit.—My plan.—The female Harpagon.

IN my last chapter I left the provisional government of the South, already weak enough through the ignorance of its leaders, still further enfeebled by their dissensions. In acquainting the reader with its melancholy termination, I shall be brief, for my provincial excursion has been rather protracted, and I am anxious to get back to Paris.

The departure of the king and the entry of Napoleon were known at Toulouse on the evening of the 23rd of March. The intelligence in no degree diminished the arrogant assurance of M. de Vitrolles, or the silly confidence which Count de Damas reposed in him. General Laborde, however, felt convinced within himself that Bonaparte would have to pay him his pension of 10,000 francs, and besides, he had, like all the military, a lurking attachment to the man who had made his fortune. He therefore conceived the project of over-

throwing the royalist government, and recognizing the emperor's authority at Toulouse; an easy matter when one considers the perfect inefficiency of the two royalist chiefs; but perilous and difficult when one reflects on the enthusiasm with which the national guard, and in particular the populace of Toulouse, had declared themselves for the Bourbon cause. The general communicated his design to some officers, who, like himself, sought nothing better than once again to unfurl their old tricoloured standard. The plan was executed in the following manner.

Marshal Perignon, who was commander in chief of all the military forces in the South, had dispatched several companies of artillery towards Lower Languedoc. General Laborde, of his own authority and unknown to the marshal, sent the artillery orders to return by forced marches to Toulouse. This order, irregular as it was, was obeyed. The companies returned just at the right moment to strike the decisive blow.

On the night of the 4th of April, General Laborde ordered Colonel Noel Girard to proceed with a hundred men to the Hotel of the Prefecture, and there to dissolve the provisional government and arrest M. de Vitrolles. No person was better fitted for such an enterprise than Colonel Girard, who was an intrepid soldier, remarkable for

coolness and self-possession. He departed with his little troop. Twice on the road he received counter-orders. Finally, he was directed to proceed, and then, to prevent the arrival of a third counter-order, he advanced at a quick march to the Hotel of the Prefecture. In two minutes the national guards on duty were disarmed by the colonel and the rest of the sentries by his artillerymen. The doors of the hotel were forced open and the party entered the court-yard. There they found two carriages, the postillions mounted, and every thing ready for departure. These were the carriages of Count de Damas and Baron de Vitrolles, who, a moment later would have decamped. These gentlemen, it appeared, had by some means or other, been informed of what was going on and were prepared to quit the place. However, Colonel Girard conceived himself bound to execute the orders he had received, and which were peculiarly agreeable to him as far as concerned Baron de Vitrolles.

He accordingly went up to the baron's apartment, where he found him ready booted, in a travelling dress, and fully prepared to quit his post. On being informed that he was arrested, the baron turned pale; but he was somewhat encouraged by being told that his life was in no danger, and that all that was wanted was to send

him off in his post-chaise for Paris. As to M. de Damas, he was considered so quiet a man that it was not even necessary to make him prisoner.

"What orders have you received with regard to me?" said he to the colonel.

"To inform you that the provisional government is at an end."

"But have you any instructions respecting my person?"

"None, Sir."

"Whither am I to be taken?"

"No where. Your excellency can remain at Toulouse or quit it,—go abroad or continue in France, just as you please."

The count then took up his hat and left the prefecture. Notwithstanding all his good nature, I dare say, he guessed the cause of the insulting indulgence with which he had been treated.

As to M. de Vitrolles, he departed for Paris accompanied by Colonel Gizard, but without any other escort, being at liberty on his parole of honour. The ex-member of the provisional government, who, like all extravagant royalists at that period, was much displeased with Louis XVIII, was silly enough to give vent to his ill-humour in the presence of a servant of Bonaparte's. The latter afterwards took care to report

all he had heard from his travelling companion. M. de Vitrolles, like his friends, disapproved the somewhat liberal course which Louis XVIII had adopted at the commencement of the revolution, and above all he could not pardon the charter. It was, he said, that odious charter, and the king's indulgence for revolutionary ideas, that had brought Bonaparte back to France. On his arrival in Paris, it was thought worth while to send the baron to Vincennes, where he remained a state prisoner until the second restoration.

When the good people of Toulouse rose from their beds, on the morning of the 5th, they learned that the provisional government was no more, and, notwithstanding the devotedness which they had expressed for the Bourbons on the preceding evening, the intelligence produced no commotion. Twenty thousand national guards or royalist volunteers, who but a few days before had declared themselves ready to die for Louis XVIII, suffered themselves to be disarmed without resistance by four companies of artillery.

Meanwhile General Laborde waited upon Marshal Perignon. "Sir," said he, "the tricoloured flag is waving on all the steeples of the city. The authority of the emperor is acknowledged in Toulouse as it is throughout all France. This is my work, but I am willing to give you all the credit of it. If you choose to say that

all has been done by your orders I will not contradict you."

"General," replied the old marshal, "if you think the step you have taken is creditable, keep the credit of it to yourself. I do not wish to appropriate to myself the actions of others, particularly when they look like treachery and perjury. For my own part, I consider myself pledged by my oath to his majesty Louis XVIII, and I will die rather than serve another sovereign. Now, you may arrest me if you please." This noble reply very much mortified General Laborde, who had hoped that the adherence of the marshal would give weight to the new cause. M^r de Saint-Aulaire, the prefect of the department, and Baron de Maleret, the Mayor of Toulouse were less obstinate : both recognized the imperial power.

Such was the melancholy end of the provisional government. In the mean time what became of the Duke of Angoulême in Lower Languedoc ?

His royal highness had been received with enthusiasm by the inhabitants of that province, and by the troops who were garrisoned there, and he was preparing to march at the head of those troops upon Lyons by the way of Provence, when some of Bonaparte's emissaries succeeded in corrupting the fidelity of the soldiers, and

what was worse, of their commanders. General Gilly set the example of defection, which was followed by the other generals. One regiment only remained faithful to the white flag : this was the 10th infantry, commanded by the brave Count d'Ambrugeac, now a lieutenant-general and a peer of France. The prince, abandoned by the rest of his army, was now the captive of those generals who but the day before had served under his command. They offered to let him escape, and even to conduct him in safety to the frontiers of Piedmont ; but, rather than separate from the brave servants who remained faithful to him, he preferred remaining a prisoner and being delivered up to Bonaparte. A man who had served Louis XVIII now came forward to give orders for arresting his nephew. This was Count Grouchy. He at first opposed the capitulation which the prince had entered into with General Gilly, by which he was at liberty to quit France with his followers ; but in the mean time the order for executing the capitulation having arrived from Paris, he conducted his royal highness with all imaginable respect to the port of Cette, where he was to embark. Count Grouchy succeeded in satisfying Bonaparte, who made him a French Marshal. The marshal's baton had never been so gained since the time of Thémynes, who received it from Cardinal Mazarin

as a reward for having arrested the Prince de Condé. But, when Louis XVIII returned, he shewed himself not very well pleased with M. de Grouchy. The latter was vexed at this, and he resorted to a thousand stratagems to gain admittance to the court, a place which he was very fond of. In 1823 or 1824, he succeeded in obtaining a private audience of the king. This excited general surprise and every one was lost in conjectures as to what had passed in the audience. I ventured to say to Louis XVIII,

“ Count Grouchy, no doubt, came to speak to your Majesty on some important political or military affair.”

“ No, Madam,” replied the king smiling, “ it was about an ecclesiastical affair.”

“ Indeed ! Sire.”

“ He came to request that I would change the *curé* of his parish. You are surprised at this, I see; but it is not the first time that Count Grouchy has solicited private audiences to speak to me about such important affairs. I understand that his whole ambition is to pass a quarter of an hour in my closet; and if his presence here is a matter of indifference to me, he wishes the public to think otherwise.”

But to return to the Duke of Angoulême. A Swedish vessel conveyed his royal highness from Cette to Spain where he established his head-

quarters, and where he was rejoined by the Duke de Damas and some other royalists whom affection or interest drew around his person.

Marseilles was the last town in France which recognised the authority of Bonaparte; but as soon as the departure of the Duke of Angoulême became known, it submitted. When the news reached Paris, the discharge of a hundred pieces of artillery announced to the capital, that France had once again fallen under the yoke of the usurper.

Napoleon himself, for a while, imagined that he had recovered his former sway; but he had not; as those who were rendered clear-sighted by their hatred of him speedily perceived. He discovered his own weakness, and called to his aid Carnot, whom he detested, and Fouché by whom he had been falsely betrayed. France, with horror beheld two regicides at the head of affairs; but the royalists secretly rejoiced to see the Duke of Otranto once more director-general of the police, convinced that ere long he would be plotting against his new master.

The other ministerial offices were filled up in the following manner: the Duke of Gaëta resumed the portfolio of finance, which he had had before the restoration. He was an honest and active man of business; he wore his hair powdered and dressed in the old fashion called *à l'oiseau royal*, and he had exactly the appearance of a

citizen before the revolution. He rarely presented himself at court, where he made but a poor figure. The Duke of Bassano was again made secretary of state: he knew the duties of his office; but he was not competent to discharge them. That conceited diplomatist, who imagined himself gifted with talent of every kind, never possessed any, but that of writing ten hours in succession to the dictation of Bonaparte. The emperor had a weak partiality for him; and the master's caprice made up for the servant's want of merit. The Duke of Decrès, a man distinguished for shrewdness, and for his address in concealing adulation under the disguise of coarseness of manners, was made minister of the marine. The treasury was placed under the controul of M. Mollien, who possessed considerable financial ability, and who, with the regularity of M. de Gaëta, combined enlarged views and versatility of talent. This was Louis XVIII's opinion of M. Mollien, and I have often heard the king regret that he could not turn the services of that able man to good account.

Count de Montalivet was appointed intendant of the crown domains, and the Prince of Parma provisionally discharged the functions of minister of justice. The office of minister of war, which Carnot had preferred to that of minister of the interior, was given to Marshal Davoust. Finally,

M. Caulaincourt, Duke of Vicenza, resumed the portfolio of foreign affairs. He was a man of elegant manners, ready talent, extensive information, and sound integrity. Bonaparte reposed in him a degree of confidence almost amounting to friendship. I may take the opportunity of mentioning here that Louis XVIII would never believe that the Duke of Vicenza had any concern in the death of the Duke d'Enghien.

While the imperial administration was thus rising on the ruins of the monarchy, I may relate in what manner I was myself employed.

My first thought was to set out for Ghent, whither his majesty had informed me he intended to retire, but I was not entirely my own mistress. Several members of my family, who had formerly served Bonaparte, now determined on serving him again. One had put on his chamberlain's robes and another his costume of counsellor of state. It was now their turn to shew themselves at the Tuileries and to rejoice; it was mine to stay at home and mourn. The individual who, since the recent death of my father, had become my nearest relative, and who conceived herself entitled to controul me, intimated to me on the 20th of March, that I must renounce my attachment for the fugitive Bourbons, or at least not take any steps in their favour which might compromise my own safety. I let her say

what she pleased without contradiction, because, in the first place, I was not in the habit of submitting to her authority, however much I respected her, and secondly, because I wished to lull her suspicions, so that I might be at liberty to act according to the dictates of my heart and understanding.

On the morning of the 22d of March, about ten o'clock, I was in bed, ill, and a prey to the most melancholy thoughts, I had given orders that I should be denied to all visitors. What was my surprise therefore to hear a great noise in the room adjoining my chamber! I rang my bell, and my maid informed me that the noise was occasioned by M. de Rovigo, who had forced himself into the hotel in defiance of the porter, and insisted on seeing me. I desired that he might be admitted. "Ah!" said I, as he entered, "your visit alarms me. I can expect no good from the minister of the imperial police."

"The minister of the imperial police!" he repeated, with an air of vexation, "reserve that title for the villain Fouché. He has robbed me of a post which belonged to me as much as the throne does to the emperor. Therefore, when Napoleon returned to the Tuileries I took possession of the Hotel of the Police. But the emperor was ill pleased at my eagerness to serve him. Misfortune sometimes sours a man's temper."

“ Did your old master conceive any suspicions of your fidelity to him ?”

“ Would you believe, Madam, that he reproached me for forsaking him last year, and for suffering him to depart without going to see him, as if I could have foreseen his return ?—Instead of making me a minister he now makes me inspector of the gendarmerie.”

—“ Well ! that is a post for which you are well calculated since you have filled it before.”

“ Truly ! this is the way to get on ! But what vexes me most of all is to be supplanted by that contemptible fellow, the Duke of Otranto, a mere plotter and contriver, who somehow or other passes for clever, though he is in reality a fool.

“ What ! the Duke of Otranto a fool ?”

“ Yes, Madam, I say he is a fool, and I know him to be so.”—I could scarcely refrain from smiling. M. de Rovigo continued : “ I should like to play him a trick in my way, and ruin him. It would be an easy matter to do so if you will help me.”

“ How can I help you ?”

“ You might,” continued the duke in a jesting manner, “ maintain a correspondence with Louis XVIII, implicating the minister of the police. I might pretend to have discovered the plot, through my agents, and denounce Fouché to the

emperor, who could not do less than hang him as he deserves."

"And he may give me a lodging in some state prison for my pains."

"I give you my word of honour not merely that you shall not be troubled, but that you shall be rewarded for your services to the government in any way you please."

The thought suddenly crossed my mind, that I might turn to my own private advantage the strange proposition which the duke had made to me. I therefore started some objections, as if I thought him serious, and then pretended to adopt his advice.

"But," said I, "would it not be better that I should go to the king, as if sent to treat with him by Fouché. I could return loaded with documents which would compromise the Duke of Otranto. Thus you might easily accomplish his ruin, especially if, before I set out, I had an audience of him; a thing which it would not be difficult to bring about."

"Excellent woman!" exclaimed the Duke of Rovigo, "your plan is better than mine. Lose no time then. See Fouché immediately and set off."

I made various arrangements with the duke respecting the execution of our plan; and it was agreed that he was to recommend me to the commanders of the gendarmerie, whom I should

meet with on my road, as the bearer of a secret mission from the government. When he was gone, I began to deliberate on what course I should pursue. I thought it most prudent to remain in Paris, until I should be positively informed of the king's arrival in Ghent, for I thought his majesty might be forced by circumstances, or by the wish of the allied sovereigns, to choose another place of residence. When I should obtain this information, it would be time enough to set off to join the king.

Having formed this resolution, my spirits were somewhat revived: my activity and courage returned at the moment when they were most necessary. I employed the last days I had to pass in Paris in visiting my friends. I encouraged the timid and checked the impetuous; but I must confess that I found more who required encouraging than checking. I remarked that the most quiet were those who, before the king's departure, had been the most noisy and violent royalists. The conclusion to be deduced from this was not very favourable to the enthusiasts and vehement protesters. I recollect among others M. de Mari-gnié, of whom I had occasion to speak in describing the conspiracy of the 30th November. At that time he used absolutely to deafen us with his royalist roaring. I met him on the evening of the 23rd or 24th of March, at the house of

Madame de Chemineau. The company consisted entirely of people of our own way of thinking, and we conversed without any restraint. But poor M. de Marignié was in such a state of alarm, that he made us laugh, though we were in no laughing humour. He got up every moment to see whether the door was shut, and whether the windows looking to the street were well closed. If a knock was heard at the door of the hotel, he turned pale: he took it for granted, it was one of Fouché's agents, and he fancied himself safely lodged in the Castle of Vincennes. Madame de Chemineau, who sometimes loved a joke, used to amuse herself at his expence. I regret to introduce the name of this lady, at a time when I cannot stop to say much about her. I should have been glad to introduce her to my readers. She was a female Harpagon worthy of the pencil of a Molière. But she was not a person living in obscurity, and indulging her avaricious propensities unchecked. On the contrary, she was a woman of fashion, figuring in the first society. She kept her carriage, her servants, and her horses, and gave a grand party regularly every Saturday. Thus, the more expences multiplied around her, the more her ingenious parsimony was called into exercise, and as she would not forego any of the habits of high life, in which she had been accustomed to mingle,

she was constantly tormented by the fear of spending her money, and the fear of incurring ridicule by hoarding it. But I must bid the good lady farewell, recommending her to the notice of some comic author, as an excellent character for the stage.

CHAPTER XV.

The emperor's recollection of me.—Invitation of Queen Hortense.—My conversation with that princess.—Interview with Bonaparte. — His questions. — My answers. — Impression which the emperor produced on me.—The balls during the empire.—The Duke of Otranto's visit to me.—The Duke de Rovigo.—Fouché renders me a service.—My exile.—My arrival at Ghent.—M. Alissan de Chazet.—I visit the king.—I meet the Duke de Richelieu.—Political conversation.—M Detazes.

My relations had rallied round their old master, and had been well received by him. I know not whether the sight of them recalled me to Bonaparte's recollection, or whether any one had spoken to the emperor about me, and the confidence with which Louis XVIII had always honoured me. Be this as it may, I had a proof that his majesty deigned to think of me. I received a note from Queen Hortense, whom I

had not seen since the restoration, though she had never quitted Paris. She invited me in the most friendly way to come and spend the evening with her *tête-à-tête*. This last word, which was underlined, immediately convinced me that there was something mysterious in the invitation. I had too much political experience to decline it.

Queen Hortense possesses all those amiable qualities of heart, which made her mother, Josephine, so much beloved. She possesses an elegant taste for the fine arts, and herself cultivates them very successfully. She paints landscapes and flowers, and sings very pleasingly songs of her own writing and composition, which would be pronounced delightful, even though they were not the production of a princess. The beauty of Queen Hortense has been greatly extolled, and though my testimony on such a subject may be thought suspicious, yet I must say that Hortense is not handsome. She may, at the very most, be called a pretty woman. She has very bad teeth, a defect which, in itself, is sufficient to disfigure the finest face in the world. Yet she possesses so much grace and elegance, so much dignity and ease of manner, and dresses with such exquisite taste, that she produces a sort of illusion and appears handsome though only passable.

Hortense was an excellent mother: unfortu-

nately she was not equally faithful to her duty as a wife. Duroc was the only man she ever loved. Having married Louis without affection, she made no scruple of evincing her indifference for him. In short she was a gay, thoughtless coquette. A great deal has been said about her passion for the Count de Flahaut. This affair occasioned considerable scandal at court, and greatly enraged Bonaparte. Several scenes took place between the emperor and the queen on the subject. The most violent ensued one day when Bonaparte returned from the parade, where he recognised on the horse of the happy Count Flahaut a superb skin, which he himself had received from the Emperor of Russia. Napoleon had given it to his daughter-in-law, and she had given it to her lover. Hortense presumed to reply angrily to the emperor's reproaches, and a violent altercation ensued, which filled all the imperial family with dismay.

As I have already said, Queen Hortense did not quit Paris during the first restoration. Her majesty was maintaining a law-suit, of rather a scandalous kind, against the king, her husband relative to her children, of whom both parents disputed the guardianship. On the 20th of March, Hortense received the emperor at the Tuileries. She did the honours of the Imperial Court, and temporarily filled the place of Maria

Louisa, whose return Bonaparte announced to the Parisians, though the latter never expected she would come.

At the appointed hour I waited upon the queen. I found her amusing herself by looking over some engravings, with one of her ladies of honour, whose name I forget. She received me most kindly, and after some compliments she said: "You were very fortunate. You passed from the court of the emperor to that of Louis XVIII."

"It is true," replied I, "that I sometimes went to present my homage to the royal family."

"Very well, very well, I do not seek to know more; but you must confess that you regret the Bourbons."

"I should be most ungrateful," I replied, "were I to forget the kindness with which they have honoured me."

At this moment I heard a door in an adjoining room close violently, and the sound of some one walking in boots. All who have seen Bonaparte can bear witness, that there was in his look and manner, something singular and extraordinary, quite different from any other man. It struck me that the emperor was in the adjoining room, and the very thought agitated me to such a degree, that I was nearly fainting. We heard a bell ring violently, upon which the Duchess de Saint-Leu rose and said, "Let us retire to the

next room ; there is some one there who wishes to speak with you."

This mode of summoning us by the ringing of a bell appeared to me singularly ungracious ; but I knew that Bonaparte was not remarkable for politeness to the members of his family. Even on grand levee days, he never permitted the kings, his brothers, to sit down in his presence, and one day Lucien, who had just recovered from a fit of illness, was so weak that he was obliged to support himself by leaning against the wall ; but his imperial brother would have let him sink to the ground rather than have allowed him the accommodation of a chair. Meanwhile, having recovered my self-possession, I followed the queen and found myself in the presence of the emperor. He stepped up to me, and without the least salutation took me by the hand and conducted me to a chair. "Sit down," said he ; then instead of sitting himself, he marched with great strides to the further end of the room. Having returned, he said, "I have not seen you for a long time, Madam ; but you have not lost your beauty yet."

"Sire," said the queen, "Madame is not older than I."

This was a curious remark, for I was at least five or six years younger than the queen. However, I changed the subject of conversation, by

congratulating the emperor on the excellent health which he appeared to enjoy.

“On my return, then, you do not congratulate me?”

This observation and the look which accompanied it, confounded me. Bonaparte perceived my embarrassment.

“Well, Madam,” continued he, “was Louis XVIII very gallant?”

I mustered up all my courage and replied, “I do not know, Sire, but I can assure your majesty that he never abused his superiority of rank, for the sake of tormenting a woman admitted to his presence.”

“Ah! I have offended you,” resumed the emperor, “so much the better. I am now revenged for your hostility to me: and yet neither you nor your family have had any reason to complain of me.”

“And, therefore, I have never complained of your majesty.”

“No, but you have intrigued, conspired, caballed with people of all parties, with the emigrants, the ideologists and the republicans. See now what you have done for France, for in spite of you all, here I am again and here I trust I shall long remain.” He pronounced these last words in a tone which I shall never forget. He then took a turn round the room, after which he

began to ask me a thousand questions respecting the king, Monsieur, the Duke of Angoulême, Madame Royale and the Duke of Berri. He wished to know every thing about them; their private habits; their relations with certain individuals of the old imperial court, especially M. de Talleyrand and the Abbé de Pradt; the correspondence which they had doubtless left in France, &c. As may be naturally supposed, I answered some of these questions directly, others evasively, and declared myself unable to gratify his imperial majesty's curiosity respecting the rest. In short, I got through this dangerous examination tolerably well. The emperor frequently turned the conversation upon the Duchess of Angoulême, for whom he expressed a degree of admiration, which I confess he was far from extending to the other members of the royal family. He afterwards asked me whether I was in the habit of seeing the Dowager Duchess of Orleans, who was detained in Paris by an accident, having broken her leg as she was stepping into her carriage to leave France. On my reply that I had frequently the honour of paying my respects to her he said: "Assure her from me that there will be no obstacle to her residing in Paris. Tell her also that I give her an annuity of one hundred thousand francs, out of my privy purse. Maret will notify this to her officially to-morrow.

If the sum is not sufficient, the duchess has only to write to me." So saying he took up his gloves which he had deposited on a side-table, perhaps with the intention of letting me see his much admired aristocratic hands, and without taking leave of us, he left the room. I did not expect that our conversation would thus have consisted of useless and frivolous questions and answers. I thought that the emperor would have opened, through my medium, some negotiation with the fugitive princes. Perhaps he had changed his mind, as he was often accustomed to do, in the course of our interview.

My conference with the emperor lasted three-quarters of an hour. I had ample opportunity to observe my illustrious interlocutor, which I did not fail to do. The following is the result of my observations.

Bonaparte was dressed that day in a green uniform. I have been told that it was the same which he had on at the battle of Waterloo, and which he afterwards wore, almost in tatters, during his captivity at St. Helena. He had been reviewing some troops that morning at the Champ-de-Mars and his coat, hat, and boots, were still dusty. This circumstance heightened the extraordinary impression which he produced upon me. However, I looked in vain for the fire which once beamed in his eyes. He stooped more than usual; his

head almost hung upon his breast ; his complexion was yellow, his countenance melancholy and thoughtful, and his little hat, drawn almost over his eyes, gave him a sort of gloomy expression.

His movements were still abrupt; but this seemed rather the effect of habit than of that fire and impetuosity which once distinguished him. In short, he had altogether a wearied and harassed appearance, which seemed to indicate the great man extinct. Accustomed as he had been to prosperity and victory, he felt the chilling hand of misfortune, and he had evidently lost that superb confidence in himself with which he knew so well how to inspire others. He also felt himself degraded in having accepted as his auxiliaries, and the defenders of his throne, those jacobins who inspired him with such horror and disgust, and whom he considered it one of his most glorious actions to have put down.

Queen Hortense detained me for some time to talk about the court of Louis XVIII. " Your Bourbons," said she, " did not know how to maintain the splendour of a court as we do. Their court was miserably paltry. There was not a woman in it who had any pretensions to elegance; and then the Duchess of Angoulême, how ill she used to dress.

I had a great mind to tell Mademoiselle de Beauharnais that Madame Royale adorned, as

she was by her virtues and the glory of illustrious birth, could well dispense with personal decoration. However, I checked myself, and with true courtier-like address, I seized the opportunity to extol the exquisite taste which always presided at the toilette of the princess. No compliment was ever more just and none could have been more agreeable to the queen; for, by a peculiarity not very common in our sex, she was less vain of her personal attractions than of the art with which she set them off. The subject of dress being once broached, the queen kept it up in a most animated way. She talked of the entertainments in which we used both to take part, in the glorious days of the empire. She recollected as distinctly as if it had all happened the preceding day, the dress, the feathers, the jewels, that any woman at all distinguished had worn on those occasions. She praised the good taste of some, and condemned the bad taste of others. I confess I felt a certain degree of gratification on hearing her make very honourable mention of me relative to a ball at the Austrian ambassador's. The whole affair had long since been obliterated from my memory; but I was very well pleased to be reminded of it. The Duchess de Saint-Leu, who did not forget herself amidst all these compliments, fully anticipated a renewal of that existence, the recollection of

which enchanted her, and which her gay and enthusiastic temperament so well qualified her to enjoy. She then little thought that those brilliant hopes were not destined to be realized, that she was doomed to quit Paris and annually linger out six months in Germany, and six months in Rome, that rendezvous of fallen greatness. At length the hour of my departure arrived, and we separated mutually pleased with each other.

On returning home in the evening I found a note from the Duke of Otranto, to whom I had written to request an interview. He replied that he would not give me the trouble of waiting upon him, but that he would call on me next morning at seven o'clock. He apologized for fixing so extraordinary an hour, by stating that he should be engaged the whole of the day in important business, and that he did not wish to defer seeing me until the day after. It was late before I returned home from the queen's, and I immediately retired to bed in order to be ready for my visiter next morning, for I knew he would be punctual. Accordingly at the appointed hour he made his appearance, wrapped in a large great coat, with a broad-brimmed hat drawn over his forehead and green spectacles. In short, his disguise was so complete that I should have found it difficult to recognize him.

"Indeed, Madam," said he, taking off his great

coat, "if it were known that I visit you at this singular hour, I should be thought happier than I am. As to this dress, it is absolutely necessary. There are many people who would not believe it possible that the minister of the police would go out at seven in the morning to take a walk or to visit his friends."

He continued thus discoursing in a lively, jocular strain, of which I hardly thought him capable, and he left me to broach a more serious subject of conversation, which I accordingly did.

"Duke," said I, "I wish to obtain a passport for Holland, where I have some business. . . ."

"Do you wish to go far into Holland?" interrupted he.

"I do not know why I should be under any reserve towards you. I wish to rejoin the king in whatever part of Holland he is.

"In that case, Madam, you must go to Ghent."

"Well! thither I will go."

"This is certainly a very generous project. It may injure you, or it may do you good: for any thing is possible in this world.

"Will you grant me the passport?"

"Certainly. Why should I refuse it?"

"Is there any commission that I can execute for you?"

"If I had received any communication, I might, to be sure, send an answer by you. But

as I have not—at any rate you may assure the king of my respectful devotedness.”

“You give him a fine proof of it in having become the minister of Bonaparte’s police!”

“The Bourbons cannot surely complain of that, Madam. They did not attach me to their government by any appointment or any honour.”

“What honour, Sir,” said I with a degree of warmth which I could not repress, “or what appointment could you hope to obtain under the Bourbons?”

“Oh, Madam,” resumed he, in a satirical tone, “this is what we call sentimental politics. But I assure you it is quite out of date now-a-days. A king who has to reign after a revolution should have neither heart nor memory, and he should choose his counsellors for their heads and not for their hearts. Present events prove the truth of this.”

He continued talking in this strain; but as I made him no reply, he soon gave it up.

“You spent yesterday evening,” said he “with the emperor and Queen Hortense. What did you think of their majesties?”

“I think that it is all over with your Napoleon.”

“Oh, you must not judge of him as he is at present. He is dissatisfied because circumstances and two or three men, like Carnot and myself,

keep his despotism in check. But let him gain two or three battles, and he will be as great and as formidable as ever he was."

The Duke of Otranto now took his leave. He had said nothing to me that could be worth repeating to the king. However, I could assure his majesty that the fidelity of the duke to Bonaparte was not very alarming. M. de Rovigo called on me in the evening.

"Well," said he, "how goes on our plan?"

"Oh, I am arranging every thing," replied I. "The minister of the police has granted me a passport to go abroad.

"How! without any enquiry? without any precautionary measure. He is a fine fellow to be sure. Did not I tell you that he was an arrant fool."

Here the duke rubbed his hands as joyfully as if he had regained possession of his portfolio, which was the dearest object of his wishes, in spite of all that he has said, or rather of all that has been said for him in his Memoirs.

I was now at liberty to set out for Ghent, to join the unfortunate prince to whom I had devoted all my affection. There was but one obstacle to impede me. How was I to escape from my relatives, who watched all my movements with the utmost anxiety? I wrote to the Duke of

Otranto acquainting him with my embarrassment. How fortunate it is to have to deal with clever people ! Next day, in answer to my note, I received a terrific letter from the minister of the police, enjoining me to quit Paris within four and twenty hours, and to proceed to Peronne. My relations were thunderstruck at this unexpected stroke. I was overwhelmed with kind consolations, urgent recommendations to be more circumspect in future, and promises that they would intercede with the emperor as soon as his first fit of anger should cool. I then set out on my journey with the intention of writing to my family from Peronne in order to keep up the illusion. On my arrival in that town, I experienced the most hospitable attentions from the Baron and Baroness Haussez-Robecourt. The Baron, who was president of the civil tribunal, was a man equally distinguished for virtue and talent. After stopping twenty four hours at Peronne I set out for Belgium. Fouché's passport and the Duke de Rovigo's letter saved me from a thousand difficulties. We were not yet at war with the Netherlands, but we were not absolutely at peace. All along the frontier a hostile attitude was assumed, which was calculated to defeat the pacific hopes in which Bonaparte still lulled the Parisians.

I cannot express the emotion I experienced on

entering the city of Ghent. I was naturally reminded of my visit to Hartwell, and my first interview with Louis XVIII.

Scarcely had I alighted from my post-chaise, when I was surrounded by numbers of my acquaintance, all eager to see me again, and still more eager to hear news from Paris.

The first thing I did was to give the king intimation of my arrival. He wrote to desire that I would immediately come to him. On my way to visit his majesty, I met in the street the songwriter Alissan de Chazet, who this time did not stay in Paris to celebrate the triumph of the conqueror. I congratulated him on his devotedness to the good cause, calling him the Tyrtæus of the restoration. The joke did not displease him. I was overheard by M. Guizot, who was passing at the time, and who gracefully made his obeisance to me; but I could not wait to speak to him, being in a hurry to attend the king.

I was not, however, sorry to be detained for a few minutes by the Duke de Richelieu, who congratulated me on my arrival in Ghent. He seemed dull and thoughtful, and I remarked so to him, to which he replied :

“ Indeed, I am dull and I have reason to be so. Every thing is going wrong. There is no sincerity in the policy of the foreign cabinets.”

“ Did you ever expect sincerity from the cabinets of London and Vienna ?”

“ It is the latter in particular that excites my apprehension. Austria evinces such indifference that I cannot help suspecting she maintains some secret understanding with the enemy of Europe !”

“ Is his majesty aware of your suspicions on this subject ?”

“ Yes, and he shares them.”

“ But what are your expectations respecting the future ?”

“ That we shall return to Paris, if Bonaparte loses his first battle ; but if he should be victorious, Austria will declare herself for him, and then we shall die in exile.”

This remark of the duke’s put me a little out of spirits. “ Well,” said I, “ we must not despair. I trust, Duke, that his majesty’s prudence, aided by good counsel, will succeed in bringing every thing about.”

“ As to good counsel,” replied the duke, “ it will not be listened to, unless it come from the mouth of the favourite.”

“ How !” I exclaimed, “ is it possible that M. de Blacas still retains his influence over his majesty, after the melancholy proofs he has given of his inability ?”

“ His influence is greater than ever ; but he has a rival, a young man whose talent and agreea-

ble manners have quite captivated the king. His name is Decazes. I believe he was private secretary to Madame Letitia Bonaparte ; you must know him."

I replied that I had not that honour.

Thus commenced the fortune of M. Decazes, a fortune which first dawned under the auspices of the Duke de Richelieu, and speedily eclipsed his.

CHAPTER XVI.

My conversation with the Duke de Blacas.—My visit to the king.—My interview with Viscount de Chateaubriand.—My second visit to the king.—Madame Royale.—Mot of the Prince de Ligne.—M. Dambray.

As I was ascending the staircase, leading to the king's apartment, I met the Duke de Blacas. It struck me that the meeting was not exactly by chance. He paid his respects to me, kissed my hand with a very gallant air, and declared himself overjoyed to see me again. I was at a loss to understand all this, for M. de Blacas and I had not been friends. The duke knew that I had oftener than once told Louis XVIII my opinion of him, and that I had, in the most decided way,

employed my little influence for the support of M. de Chateaubriand, when a candidate for the ministry. Now, M. de Chateaubriand was the evil genius of M. de Blacas, who hated him as a silly favourite detests an able statesman, of whose talent he stands in fear. Thus he was deeply mortified to find that M. de Chateaubriand was generous enough to accept from the king, in exile, a portfolio about which, many, once so eager for it, seemed now indifferent.

The duke, having gone through his polite greetings, said to me :

“ Madam, his majesty is at present engaged with his minister of the interior; but in the mean time will you grant me the honour of a few minutes’ conversation. I wish to speak to you on some matters which are equally interesting to us both.”

“ That being the case, Duke, I am at your service.”

The duke conducted me into a little apartment furnished in the gothic style. It adjoined the king’s closet. We could distinctly hear his majesty’s voice. He was speaking very loudly and in the tone of one irritated.

I took a chair, and M. de Blacas stood beside me. He began by making a detailed apology for every thing with which he was reproached. This of course was rather a tedious business. He

then proceeded to criticise all the persons about the king: the Dukes de Damas, de la Châtre, de Richelieu, and Père Elisée. He did not forget M. Decazes whose rising favour alarmed him. He concluded by proposing that I should join him, and use all my influence with the king in his behalf, giving me to understand that if we returned to Paris, and he got appointed to the ministry, he would do every thing in his power to repay me. I regarded this proposition as arising out of the embarrassment of a man who felt the conviction of his own incapacity, and who sought support, in the moment of danger, from an enemy whom he thought he had reason to fear. Such things happen daily among courtiers, and I do not mean to say that M. de Blacas was more to blame than others. But these little reconciliations, of which it is always easy to discern the motives, should be managed artfully and delicately; and this M. de Blacas could not do. However, I pretended not to entertain the least doubt of the sincerity of the new sentiments which he had conceived for me. Without compromising myself too far, I said enough to make him very well satisfied with me. I had my reasons for so doing. I had learned from M. de Richelieu that Blacas still enjoyed the confidence of the king, and I wished, through the medium of the favourite, to convey to

his majesty's ears that good advice which he was himself incapable of giving. I now remarked to M. de Blacas that we no longer heard the sound of voices in the king's closet, and that I presumed I might be admitted to his majesty. "Allow me," said he, "to have the honour of introducing you. I wish to witness the pleasure which his majesty will experience on seeing you."

As soon as I entered the king's closet, his majesty stretched out his hand to me with a cordiality of manner which deeply affected me. I threw myself at the feet of the unfortunate prince, weeping at once for joy and sorrow.

The king raised me up, and I stood for some moments without the power of utterance. M. de Blacas profited by my silence to pay me some compliment. The king, who was not accustomed to hear me praised by his favourite, appeared to suspect that we were on better terms with each other than formerly, and he darted at me a look which seemed to ask whether I was sincere in my reconciliation with my old enemy.

His majesty questioned me about every thing that had happened in Paris since his departure; the reception given to Napoleon, the state of the public mind, &c. I satisfied the king's curiosity as well as I could. I related my conversation with Fouché. It suggested to the king

the idea that the Duke of Otranto expected to receive propositions from the Bourbons, and that he would not reject them. "It is," he exclaimed, "a cruel necessity to be reduced to accept the services of a regicide. One would almost renounce a crown rather than recover it at such a price." The king was much interested by the account of my interview with Bonaparte. Napoleon's curiosity respecting the private life and habits of his family surprised him. When I endeavoured to describe the gloomy dejection which I had remarked in the countenance of the usurper, I perceived that my words excited in the heart of his majesty a sentiment of joy and hope.

"Well, Madam," said the king, "you must approve of what I have done. Your friend M. de Chateaubriand has got the appointment which you have so often solicited for him."

I replied that I rejoiced at it, especially for the sake of the royal cause, and that my illustrious friend would fully justify, by his talents and loyalty, all that I had said in his behalf.

These words were not very agreeable to M. de Blacas; but I was not the woman to abandon a man like M. de Chateaubriand, for the sake of pleasing such a man as M. de Blacas. His majesty had now said all he had to communicate to me relative to public affairs, yet he did

not dismiss me. It was evident that he wished to converse with me alone. M. de Blacas had not the sense to perceive this, and at length his majesty requested him to leave the room, which he did with a very ill grace.

Louis XVIII then entered into conversation with me with all that amiable familiarity, which rendered the moments I passed in his society so gratifying to my heart. He deigned to assure me that since his departure from Paris he had frequently thought of me, and that, amidst his misfortunes, he regarded it as a precious solace to have me near him. We talked for a long time together, and I departed with the conviction that his majesty's sentiments towards me were not less kind and affectionate than ever. I may also observe that on my part I never cherished a more sincere attachment for that noble prince. He was a king and unfortunate ; I was a woman and a royalist.

On leaving the king, I experienced that sensation of pleasing melancholy, which the scene I had passed through could not fail to excite. I walked through the long streets of the city of Ghent, whose gothic edifices had a peculiar charm for me. The historical recollections connected with that ancient city arose rapidly in my mind. I compared the events of which it had formerly been the scene, with those which were now

passing within its walls. I recollected that Charles V was born and brought up in Ghent, and that he left his native city to conquer the world by the two-fold power of courage and genius. Will the cradle of that terrible enemy of Francis I, thought I, be the tomb of the monarchy of the Bourbons? Are we to lose every thing, *fors l'honneur*? Are we in another Colblentz, and are we again to pass through the ordeal of another twenty-five years of revolution before we greet a second restoration? At that thought Ghent appeared to me only an odious prison. The noise in the streets seemed insufferable. Alas! the increased bustle and activity which now prevailed in Ghent was caused by the court of the fugitive king and the presence of his exiled subjects.

I had no sooner returned home than I received a visit from M. de Chateaubriand. I was overjoyed to see him; but what was my disappointment to find M. de Chateaubriand low-spirited, and apparently weary of his newly acquired honour! He informed me that since his appointment, the court jealousy with which he was beset had become more violent than ever. His literary fame gave umbrage to the courtiers; they seized every opportunity of annoying and tormenting him, and for fear he should seem to do

every thing, they were determined that he should do nothing.

“If,” said he, “one could abandon one’s post, without dishonour in the moment of danger, I assure you I would not scruple to retire. Greatness dazzles the eye when viewed from a distance; but, on a near approach, it affords only disappointment and vexation. My condition is not better as a statesman than it was as a literary man. I ought to have passed the remainder of my life as I began it, wandering over the world, or shut up in my closet with my books and my cat.”

Having thus confided to me his private griefs, M. de Chateaubriand informed me that the insincerity of the foreign courts, and the unfavourable symptoms evinced by one in particular, filled him with the most alarming apprehensions. Like M. de Richelieu, he was of opinion that the Emperor of Austria would recollect that Napoleon was his son-in-law, if the latter gained his first battle.

While conversing with M. de Chateaubriand I was not aware how rapidly time slipped away; he too lost his reckoning, for M. Bertin came to remind him of an appointment the hour of which was long past. I was very glad to see M. Bertin. To say that he is the intimate friend of M.

de Chateaubriand is a sufficient evidence of his talent, character, and loyal principles. He edited at Ghent, the Royal Moniteur which was established in opposition to the Moniteur of Paris and which easily maintained a competition with its rival, thanks to the vigorous and logical articles which appeared in it. M. Bertin's exertions in the royal cause, both before and since the restoration, are known to every one. By an unparalleled trait of activity, he regained in 1814 the management of the *Journal des Débats*, of which he had been deprived by Bonaparte. On the day on which the approaching restoration of the Bourbons was made known, he got up a royalist *Journal des Débats*, had it printed, and on the following day about eighteen thousand copies were distributed in Paris and the provinces. The men who had received from Bonaparte the spoils of M. Bertin dared not venture to compete with him. They dropped their paper, and M. Bertin resumed the proprietorship of the *Journal des Débats*. But to return to Ghent.

On the following day the king sent me a note requesting that I would attend him. I found him ill. I endeavoured to rally his spirits by introducing a cheerful strain of conversation. "It is in vain," said he, "nothing can divert my melancholy at this moment. I never was so unfortunate. I am in the most perplexing

situation and the consolations, which have always supported me through my former difficulties, are wanting now."

His majesty informed me that his uneasiness proceeded from two different causes. I feel no scruple in explaining the first. A conspiracy was formed at Ghent against the charter: the leaders of it were persons who had given the king proofs of their devotedness during his exile, and who now, presuming on the influence which that devotedness afforded them, ventured to remonstrate with his majesty against the charter, which, they said, had caused the renewed misfortunes of the royal family. This intrigue, supported by the imposing authority of two foreign powers, Austria and Prussia, led his majesty to fear that he should not be permitted to re-enter his states, until he solemnly revoked all his preceding concessions. The king cherished a paternal regard for the charter, and he only reproached himself for not making his courtiers respect it as they ought to have done.

To restore the ancient monarchy appeared to him impossible, and to attempt it, would, he conceived, involve France and the Bourbon family in a contest, in which the latter would be defeated. As to the other affair, which distressed his majesty's mind, I can scarcely presume to speak of it. It was a dissatisfaction which the king en-

tertained respecting the conduct of his august niece, the Duchess of Angoulême.

That princess, on her arrival from Bordeaux, had given her uncle some advice with which he was not perfectly pleased. She urged it with that degree of energy which excited a suspicion, that she was anxious to supersede her uncle in the admiration and love of the French people. Such a wish, however, was far from the heart of Madame Royale ; but Louis XVIII, like all unfortunate princes, was the more jealous of his authority in proportion as he seemed likely to lose it. The duchess asked her royal uncle's permission to proceed to England, where she remained until after the second restoration.

The reverses of the Duke of Angoulême in Languedoc, and his arrest, which I have already spoken of, were another source of inquietude to Louis XVIII. He expected soon to hear that the tragedy of the Duke d'Enghien's death had been renewed. But Bonaparte was not sufficiently sure of his new power, to expose himself, a second time, to the odium which the murder of a Bourbon had already brought upon him. Luckily the sinister forebodings of the king were banished by the receipt of a letter from the duke, announcing his safe arrival in Spain. I informed the king that Napoleon had caused to be published in the Paris papers that the Duke

of Angoulême had pledged himself, by the capitulation he had signed, to procure for Bonaparte the restitution of the crown diamonds, which diamonds Bonaparte claimed as his, since he had reascended the throne. "That," said Louis XVIII, "reminds me of a droll story which I once read in the English papers. A thief broke into the dressing-room of a lady of rank and stole her jewels which were of great value. Recollecting that he had accidentally left a ruby necklace on the chimney-piece, he wrote to the lady requesting her to deposit it in a certain place, where he might get it, because he conceived it to belong to him as much as the other valuables he had stolen. I presume," added the king, "that the lady did not accede to the thief's request, nor do I intend to shew any complaisance to my robber."

This little anecdote, which I repeated, occasioned much merriment; and in truth merriment was not very common at the court of Ghent. Many individuals, who followed the king, had consulted their own feelings rather than their pecuniary circumstances, and they already began to feel the embarrassment of wanting money in a foreign country. It was supposed that the king had brought millions with him, and that he would provide for his followers; but, on the contrary, the king had only what was barely sufficient for

his own maintenance. As to the crown jewels he did not think himself at liberty to part with them. His majesty beheld with pain the difficulties which threatened many of his faithful servants. He recollected all the humiliations to which poverty had exposed them, twenty years before, and on this subject he quoted a remark of the Prince de Ligne: "I would rather," said the prince, "be the dog of a German baron than an emigrant admitted to his table."

In this state of things every new comer was not made welcome at Ghent. M. de La Ferté arrived and went to call on M. de Blacas, from whom he expected, at least, a gracious reception. "What have you come here for?" said M. de Blacas, "do you think we have brought with us all the money in France?"

"Sir," said M. de La Ferté, "a man like me, who has a sword by his side, and sixty thousand francs in gold in his portmanteau, is not likely to be a troublesome visiter to any one." Poor M. de Blacas of course looked very foolish on hearing this, and lost no time in making amends for his rudeness to one who came provided with cash as well as fidelity.

But, on the other hand, Louis XVIII could not pardon those who, in defiance of their duty, had forsaken him when it was most requisite they should have stood by him. For example, a day

never passed on which he did not complain of the absence of M. Dambray, the chancellor of France, who, instead of following him, had set off to philosophise on his estate in Normandy. It would appear that these complaints reached the ears of M. Dambray, for he proceeded to Ghent; but, as he had not evinced his fidelity at a proper time, he did not raise himself in the king's estimation by this tardy fulfilment of his duty. He was coldly received, and he found himself in rather an awkward dilemma, as he had no means of returning to Normandy.

CHAPTER XVII.

Intrigues at Ghent.—M. de Chateaubriand.—Count Jules de Polignac.—My return to France.—My farewell to Louis XVIII.—The Duke of Ragusa.—My arrival in Paris.—The Duke of Rovigo visits me.—I visit Fouché.

I WAS not long in Ghent before I saw how things went on. The little court of exiles was a prey to intrigues and cabals; it was really worse than Paris. The king, who could not form a just appreciation of the merit of his favourite, M. de Blacas, lent an indifferent ear to the counsel of his real friends and advisers. Viscount de Cha-

teaubriand had become Louis XVIII's prime minister, without thereby gaining his majesty's friendship. None but M. de Chateaubriand could, in the then state of things, have honourably fulfilled the functions confided to him. He had to maintain continual negotiations with the allies, to obtain from them, by persuasion, the aid which they were not willing to give, to keep the emigrants in check without wounding their self-love, and to keep up, towards every one, the appearance of soliciting that which ought to have been commanded in the name of the king. His admirable conduct deserved the utmost commendation; but M. de Blacas was there. I supported him with all my influence; but in vain. The favourite was more powerful than I. He every morning undid all that I had done on the preceding evening, and at length he succeeded in prejudicing the king's mind against me.

There was at Ghent an individual whom the private court of Monsieur took every opportunity of putting forward. This was Count Jules de Polignac; even so early as the year 1815 a notion prevailed that this young man ought to be made a minister; and whether he was fitted for the office or not, it was resolved to push him forward. The king however did not pay much attention to these recommendations. He said to me one day when speaking of Count Jules:

“ I appreciate his devotedness, and I esteem his virtues ; but devotedness and virtue are not the only qualities necessary to direct, with success, the present affairs of France.”

Meanwhile Monsieur's party spared no exertions in behalf of their protégé ; but M. de Blacas, who was as much afraid of influence as of talent, never rested day or night until he had forced Count Jules to quit Ghent, by giving him a mission, to excite an insurrection in those provinces of France in which, there was reason to hope, the sacred fire of royalism had not been extinguished by the events of the 20th of March. I myself left Ghent before that noble champion of the good cause.

I had flattered myself to follow, to the last, the fortune of my august protector ; but Providence ordained otherwise. When I say Providence I am wrong : I ought rather to say M. de Blacas, for Providence does not cabal. M. de Poix, whom I frequently saw, was the first to inform me of the plot that was hatching against me. I afterwards learned that the good M. de Blacas had been tormenting the king about my residence in Ghent, and that he complained of intrigues. I thought this somewhat singular, and I deemed it advisable to speak to his majesty on the subject. He listened to me attentively and when I had done he said :

“ There are some very wicked tongues about me; but be assured that nobody can injure you in my estimation, and if I am forced to send you away, do not suppose it is through any prejudice I have conceived against you. The present state of my affairs urges me to this. I daily receive the most positive assurances that the Duke of Otranto is actively exerting himself to bring about my return. It is proper that I should have some one near him on whose fidelity I can rely, and who, at the same time, will not incur the distrust of Bonaparte's government. Your sex will exempt you from suspicion: I know that the Duke of Otranto esteems you; he will be very ready to negotiate with you, because he will flatter himself, that hereafter you will recommend him to my favour. Do not therefore regard as a banishment, or a disgrace, the important mission with which I wish to entrust to you. If it succeed, you will reap the glory and advantage of it: if it fail, then I will immediately recall you here.”

In spite of these fine words I was piqued, and I could not forbear repeating somewhat hastily

“ *Le seigneur Jupiter sait dorer la pillule.*”

“ No, no,” resumed the king, “ it is the interest of my crown alone which determines this painful separation.”

“ Ah! Sire, since you compliment me thus

I cannot but declare my readiness to go; but to tell the truth, I would rather you had sent M. de Blacas away than me."

After some further remarks of this sort the conversation resumed a serious turn. The king gave me my instructions and informed me of a sure medium of corresponding directly with himself. He recommended me to obtain all possible information in the court of Napoleon, not to neglect the Duchess of Saint-Leu, and above all to see whether I could not regain some of the old marshals. He counted, I cannot tell why, on Brune and Augereau. Count Jourdan was also on my secret notes, but I did not find him in Paris when I arrived there. The king also said to me: "There are two other men whom you must not neglect; they may both render me important service. They have great influence, and if they declare themselves against Bonaparte, they will give the signal for my return. These are the two directors, Barras and Carnot: the latter is not perhaps very friendly to me, but his conduct in 1814 was far too imprudent. As to the other, he and I are old acquaintances; see him, converse with him, and induce him to declare himself honestly; he may rely on my gratitude."

I promised to obey the king's instructions. His majesty once more assured me of the confidence he reposed in me. I feigned to believe

him, though in reality I well knew, that in his majesty's mind, the favourite would always have the advantage over the friend. His weak side was allowing himself to be led by men for whom he conceived a liking. To the Marquis de Montesquiou-Fezensac succeeded M. d'Avaray, to M. d'Avaray succeeded M. de Blacas. The last favourite was M. Decazes. As to M. de Villèle, he was minister and nothing more.

On my departure, Count de Blacas overwhelmed me with assurances of his friendship, which I returned with true courtier-like sincerity. I was not his dupe, and I was resolved, at the proper time and place, to take my revenge for the trick he had played me. I parted from M. de Chateaubriand with unfeigned regret. I was vexed to leave him in his embarrassing situation. I knew he had ability enough to extricate himself from the difficulty; but at the same time I had too high an opinion of him to expect that he would escape from such a host of intrigue with the honours of war.

I again bade adieu to Marshal Marmont, Duke of Ragusa, whom I saw very frequently during my stay at Ghent. I was convinced that, in spite of some faults, the marshal possesses many excellent qualities. I do not allude to his courage and his military genius: they require no comment. But I think he would have made

a very good diplomatist. He is shrewd and adroit, possesses considerable conversational talent, and a most pleasing address. The monarchy might have benefited by his services, if his enemies had not been allowed to persecute him in 1814. His obliging manners to me, while I was at Ghent, laid the foundation of a friendship between us, which still exists undiminished. The king appeared moved at the moment of my departure. I was grateful for this affected sensibility, which I must confess was played off very gracefully. He put round my neck a superb diamond necklace, and in the box containing my dispatches, I found one hundred thousand francs in bank bills. This, it must be confessed, was a magnificent farewell. I should have wished for less generosity and more real friendship. Be this as it may, I resigned myself to my fate, and I set out for France, whither it was far from my wish to have returned without the king. I passed the frontier without difficulty, and rapidly pursued my journey to Paris. Here I found my family had fully renewed their allegiance to Napoleon. They received me with a degree of surprise mingled with alarm. My absence had not been long, but it was very well known where I had been, and such a journey was calculated to terrify all true courtiers. I was reprimanded beyond bounds, and desired to

act with more caution in future ; but, as I shall presently shew, my friends did not stop there.

I got home about two in the afternoon, and it was not until next morning that I wrote to the Duke of Otranto informing him of my return. He immediately replied to me by the following note :

“ Madame la Comtesse,

“ I am overjoyed to hear that you have returned in good health. I was informed of your arrival yesterday evening, and by persons intimately connected with you. The minister of the police receives incredible proofs of the attachment which is universally cherished for the chief of the empire. I am all anxiety to pay my respects to you. If you wish to see me officially I will immediately send you an invitation to attend my audience. I break off my letter to give directions for drawing up a report on your person and your projects, for it is proper that the emperor should be informed of every thing that takes place.

“ I have the honour to be, with profound respect, &c.”

I was perfectly astonished at the treacherous part which my family had acted. Nevertheless, I wrote to the Duke of Otranto to solicit the audience.

I was anxious also to see the poor Duke of Rovigo, who had looked for my arrival like the coming of the Messiah. I accordingly sent him a neat little perfumed billet, to intimate that I was ready to receive him. Such was his impatience, that he came that same evening. He was quite elated and hardly gave himself time to pay me the usual compliments.

"Well, Madam," said he, "have you brought any thing that can compromise our enemy?"

"Alas!" said I, making a long face, "the king would not enter into any intrigue, and persons with whom I was no favourite at the court of Ghent, have succeeded in driving me from it."

This reply disappointed the duke.

"The devil take it," said he, "those people have become so distrustful. But, perhaps, you did not proceed with due caution."

"Oh! Sir, so you too are beginning to find fault with me. Truly it well becomes you. And after all, did you really think that I should study your interests more than my own? Certainly not. And when I found that I could do nothing more for myself, I thought I could do nothing more for other people."

I had my design in speaking thus. I had no doubt that the Duke of Rovigo would relate my adventure to Napoleon, and I wished that the latter should suppose my disgrace to be complete,

and that on my return to France I had lost all connexion with the royal family.

M. de Rovigo believed me on my word. He endeavoured to console me. He addressed me, as he had sometimes done before, in the language of gallantry; but this would not do. His inelegant manners always displeased me. While he was with me I received from the minister of general police an invitation to appear at his audience next morning at eleven o'clock. I shewed it to the Duke.

"Heavens!" said he, "this fellow knows every thing. Who can tell but he may take it in his head to persecute you. Will you allow me to say a word to the emperor to put a stop to the ill-natured meddling of the Duke of Otranto?"

"By all means. You will render me the greatest service. I may have been influenced by my private feelings in going to see the King; but I am not a conspirator, though I have performed what you call the sentimental journey."

"Mon Dieu!" replied the Duke with that *naïveté* which is natural to him, "nobody knows better than I do that you did not go to Ghent for the sake of caballing. That rascal the Duke of Otranto is always suspecting mischief; but I assure you that when the emperor hears the truth no harm will come to you."

"And will you tell him the truth?"

The duke wished me good evening and departed without giving any direct answer to this last question.

Next morning I was punctual to my appointment with Fouché.

"Do you know," said I, "that you are very imprudent. I will have nothing more to do with you. You yesterday addressed to me a note which...."

"Oh! I do not give myself the trouble to keep up any deception. Things are going on in such a way that one may as well act openly. However, I know my correspondent and my messengers."

The conversation then turned to another subject. Fouché asked me some questions as to what was going on at Ghent. I did not conceal from him any thing which I thought I ought to tell him. I informed him that Count de Blacas was still in the enjoyment of the king's favour, and I complained of him with unfeigned bitterness.

"He is really a very annoying fellow," replied Fouché, "but I will take care of him, provided he does not purloin the memorial which I intend to address to the king."

"Make yourself easy on that point," said I, "the Prince de Poix, who does not like Blacas, has promised to be my intermediate agent whenever I wish to transmit any communication to the king unknown to his Pylades."

“ Well, I will set about it instantly. I will take care that he shall never again return to France. The count’s fears will be a great assistance to me in this matter. We may do what we like with some people by dint of frightening them.”

“ Oh !” said I, “ now I have discovered a political secret.”

The duke laughed at this. He then informed me that he had made his report to the emperor upon me and my journey.

“ I have informed him,” added he, “ that I intended to send for you and that I would acquaint him with the result of our conference.”

“ And what will you tell him ?” inquired I eagerly.

“ All, or at least all that I must tell him. That you have been to Ghent with the view of maintaining your favour with the king, and that you wished to support that favour on the services of M. de Chateaubriand; that M. de Blacas, seeing this, injured you in his majesty’s good opinion and that finally you are in complete disgrace.”

“ Upon my word,” said I, “ you give me a fine part to play, and one that is not very gratifying to my vanity.”

“ What does that signify, provided you are not annoyed : that is the grand point. I intend also to put you under surveillance in Paris. Thus

you will have a pretence for daily coming to see me. Do not be alarmed, I am not going to make you a prisoner. If business or pleasure should call you hence, you have only to inform me and I will give you an opportunity of slipping off."

Fouché then asked me if Louis XVIII had not intrusted me with some commissions to persons of eminence. I replied that I was to see many persons, but I named none.

"Take care what you are about," said Fouché. "Some people are very imprudent. Besides you will be strictly watched. Mine is not the only police in the Empire."

He told me that Napoleon would perhaps wish to see me, and that his penetration was to be feared.

"Oh!" replied I, "he is a man and I am a woman. It is hard if I have not the advantage of him."

"Do not be too sure of that," replied Fouché, modestly. "The emperor is very sharp. I myself sometimes find it no easy matter to deceive him."

I then took leave of Fouché.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Some observations on Barras.—My conversation with him.—

My interview with Count Carnot.—My visit to Queen Hortense.—Count and Countess Regnault.—Political conversation in my carriage.

SINCE I had been made an agent of royalty I determined to execute the orders I had received, and to prove to his majesty that I could be more serviceable to him than the man for whom he had sacrificed me. This first step of revenge was very gratifying to my female heart. I did not forget that my instructions enjoined me to see the two ex-directors, Barras and Carnot. With the former the king had corresponded for a long series of years. Their connexion, strange as it may appear, took its date from the time of the directory. But, after all, it must be remembered, that most of the men who figured in the revolution took part in it without very well knowing what they were about. They proscribed royalty only from passion or interest, and retained in their hearts a consciousness of its rights and of their own weakness. Thus it was found easy to rally most of the furious republicans round the legitimate party. Barras, above all, cherished for the Bourbon family an involuntary respect ; even in

the height of his *sans-culottism*, he never forgot that he was a nobleman, and he loved to act the man of rank in the presence of his plebeian colleagues. He appeared to listen to the propositions made to him by Fauche-Borel on the part of his majesty; and there is every reason to believe that, but for the events of the 18th brumaire, he would have restored to the throne the august family by whom we are now governed.

All this is known to every body; but I will now relate some facts which have never before been published, and for the truth of which I can vouch, unless indeed Barras deceived the personage from whom I heard them.

Barras, seduced by the agents of Louis XVIII, and wishing to restore the crown to that prince, conceived that the best mode of accomplishing that object was to gain over to the royal cause General Bonaparte, who was then in Egypt. He communicated his plan to Madame Bonaparte, to whom he offered, in the name of Louis XVIII for her husband, the title of Prince of Lodi; the sword of constable of France, six hundred thousand francs per annum in landed property and six hundred thousand in the consolidated funds; a duchy for young Eugene de Beauharnais; a fortune of a million of francs to Hortense, her daughter, and a duchy for her husband whenever she might marry; and finally, titles, honours and

money for all Bonaparte's brothers. On hearing these propositions Josephine wept for joy. She was a devoted royalist, as subsequently, in the splendour of her rank, she continued to be. She mentioned the business to her brothers-in-law, who, either in sincerity, or with some sinister design against Josephine, declared that it would be advisable to await Bonaparte's return. They accordingly drew up a memorial which was forwarded to him. Barras also wrote to him, and thus an active correspondence was established between them. Bonaparte wrote to the directory that he was ready to undertake the counter-revolution; but that, as he could do nothing for the royal cause in Egypt, it would be necessary that he should return to France, and that measures should be taken to ensure his safe passage home.

This appeared perfectly reasonable to Barras as well as to his majesty. Louis XVIII made an application to the English ministry, and Bonaparte returned safe and sound to Paris. There he amused Barras with all sorts of fine protestations; and Barras, in spite of his own cunning, was imposed upon. He was not undeceived until the moment when Bonaparte, being secure of the revolution, treated him so cavalierly on the 18th brumaire. Thus he heartily detested the

Corsican, and Louis XVIII conceived that he might make this hatred subservient to the interests of his policy.

I was accordingly instructed to see the ex-director. On the third day after my arrival in France, I went out early in the morning plainly dressed, and unattended by any servant. I got into a *voiture de remise*, which I had hired on the preceding day, in the passage Cendrier, which conveyed me to the residence of Barras, to whom my visit was unexpected. He received me with all the gallantry for which he was distinguished in early life.

The eye of Barras, though somewhat dimmed by age, still retained a certain sinister expression which I did not like. His manner was that of a haughty man accustomed to command. His smile was pleasing, and the tone of his voice indescribably captivating. He had played a part too desperate for his nature. He was of aristocratic birth, and yet he conceived himself bound to shed the blood of his king, as a pledge of his attachment to liberty. He had been a jacobin from necessity; and when raised to the highest station in the republic he wished to resume his rank of nobleman. He united in his person all the profligacy of the old *régime* and all the boldness of the new. His reign was one of impudent peculation. I con-

ceive that his fall is to be attributed to the scandal of his private life rather than to the magnitude of his political offences. Barras was a lover of the arts and sciences; but in the eyes of posterity he will appear merely as a man of the common stamp, elevated by circumstances, which he could neither profit by nor direct.

Our conversation opened by Barras making some inquiries respecting my family, with whom he had been well acquainted. He was aware of my connection with Louis XVIII. This I perceived by his significant smile whenever I spoke of the king, and the mission with which he had entrusted me.

“ This is as it should be,” said he, “ the good old times have come back when the fair sex took a leading part in politics. No diplomatists are so sure of success as the ladies, especially when, with the attractions of talent, they combine the graces of youth and beauty. Such are your advantages, Madam, and I cannot but regret that age disables me from receiving you with the gallantry due to so fair an ambassadress.”

I took care to shew my disapproval of the impertinence of this last observation. I replied that I was entirely devoted to the king and wholly intent on fulfilling my duty to him.

“ His majesty is happy,” resumed Barras,

“ in having such zealous servants. But how can I second you ? And shall I be better treated than I have hitherto been ? ”

“ Have you any reason to complain, Sir, of our excellent king ? ”

“ Not exactly of the king ; but of the persons about him. I have met with no return for my good intentions. I was to be rewarded only in the event of my success ; and last year they permitted me to be insulted in every possible manner.”

“ At that period of excitement, it would have been difficult for the king to have restrained every body within the bounds of moderation. But his majesty’s intentions are well known. All he wants is present union, and oblivion of the past.”

“ Oblivion of the past ! Ah madam ! that is impossible. The past preys on my mind and is as fresh in my recollection as though it had all happened yesterday.”

Barras uttered these words with emotion. I saw that he was entering upon a train of gloomy ideas, and I thought it best to change the conversation. I told him that Louis XVIII relied very much on the services which he might render to the royal cause, by getting himself nominated to the chamber of representatives, which was about to be instituted to consolidate the new usurpation.

“ That I cannot do,” said he. “ I was too long the first magistrate of the republic, to consent to play an humble part now. Besides, I would not, for any consideration, accept functions which would oblige me to pledge myself to Bonaparte. I despise him, and I should consider myself degraded were I to acknowledge him as my sovereign.”

In vain did I conjure Barras to dissemble; all my entreaties were unavailing. He gave me his promise to speak to several generals and influential members of the government, and then asked me whether I had seen Fouché.

I replied in the affirmative.

“ He is the man,” continued Barras, “ who can be most useful to you. He has neither conscience nor virtue. He would buy and sell his master at any time. And Carnot, is his name on your list?”

“ It is Sir.”

“ Oh! the jacobin savage is somewhat tamed. I always thought that he would end in this way. I knew him well when I put him down in the directory on the 18th fructidor: I saw his ungovernable ambition. And yet every body thinks him disinterested and extols him as such. Public opinion is not always right.”

This attack of Viscount de Barras upon Count Carnot amused me. It showed me how little

differences of opinion between individuals of the same party, may produce violent hatred. These two individuals now mutually detested each other more than they detested the royalists. The ex-director paid me some compliments in the style of a superannuated gallant, and I took my leave of him. I thought it somewhat droll that I should part from him to attend the audience of the minister of the interior. I was not kept long waiting in the saloon, but was soon introduced to his excellency, who received me with so much coldness and dignity that I was convinced he did not recognise me, so I made myself known to him.

“ Well, Madam,” said he drily, “ what do you wish ?”

“ I wish, Sir,” (I refrained from giving him his title of count, lest he should think I was ridiculing him) “ to solicit you to use your influence with the emperor to get me released from the surveillance under which I am placed.”

“ You under surveillance, Madam ! What ! has the reign of despotism and *lettres de cachet* begun again ? That measures should be taken to prevent men from conspiring is all very right, but that women should be treated thus ! really this is carrying precaution too far. And why are you under surveillance ?”

“ For having visited Ghent.”

“ Oh, you have been to Ghent, and I suppose you were not well received, and for that reason you have come home again. Is it not so, Madam ?”

“ Something of that sort. The truth is I had rivals.”

“ Oh,” said Carnot, with a satirical smile, “ rivals of the other sex. With the king, male rivals have more influence than female ones.”

I took no notice of this impertinence. I spoke of the king, and described him as being very sorry for the faults into which he had been betrayed, and as determined to repair them if ever he should re-ascend his throne.

“ Oh, do not imagine that we shall be taken in a second time,” replied Carnot. “ We have got back our emperor and we will keep him.”

This language in the mouth of Carnot surprised me.

“ The king,” said I, “ gave you the charter, and Napoleon now restores to you the constitution of the empire. If this is what you call liberty, it is at least not the liberty which you once wanted.”

“ It is not, Madam ; but the grand point is to be rid of the Bourbons. They are gone and we are happy.”

I saw that there was nothing to be done with such a man, and I left him with the determination

of not seeing him again. I have no doubt but that the report which I made to the king of this visit, not a little contributed to the rigorous treatment Carnot subsequently experienced. He had manifested such hostility to the royal family, that they could not be expected to shew him any pity.

I soon received an invitation from Queen Hortense. I called on her one morning, and was immediately admitted.

"I do not know, Madam," said I, "whether I ought to present myself to you at a moment when I am in deep disgrace with the government."

"What is the matter?"

"The police keeps a watchful eye upon me. I am under the surveillance of the Duke of Otranto."

"What! have you been conspiring?"

"No, Madam. I am only guilty of having been at Ghent to present my homage to the unfortunate king."

"And you are to be punished for that! Really this is too bad. I will speak to the Duke of Otranto about it this evening. Well, and how are they all at Ghent? Are they amusing themselves; are they forming any plots? I am sure they are contriving something against us."

"Indeed, Madam the king does not appear

disposed to surrender his crown to the emperor. He expects much from the co-operation of the allied powers."

"What, do they want to go to war again? Why may not the business be amicably arranged? After all, it is the people who are the victims."

"And sometimes kings," replied I. At this moment the Count and Countess Regnault de Saint-Jean-d'Angely were announced. On hearing the husband and wife announced at the same time, the queen uttered an exclamation of surprise. "It is," said she, "one of the miracles of the imperial restoration to see this couple together. Nothing was ever more edifying." The count and countess entered. The queen continued her raillery. M. Regnault declared that he was too happy in thus deserving the praises of her majesty; but that candour obliged him to confess that he had met the countess on the staircase of the palace. He then launched into a train of gallant and witty remarks, and the conversation was agreeably kept up. After some time I arose to take my leave. The count also rose, pretending that business called him away. He accompanied me down stairs, and handed me into my carriage, in which he requested that I would give him a seat. I did so without hesitation, for I was glad to have an opportunity of conversing with him.

“ Do you know,” said he, “ that you were spoken of yesterday evening at the palace? The Duke of Rovigo, and Count Carnot complained that you had been put under surveillance. The Duke of Otranto insisted on the necessity of that measure. The emperor was of his opinion, for he believes you have returned to France only for the purpose of intriguing.”

“ If his spies at Ghent served him better than they do, he would know to the contrary. He would know too, that the animosity which M. de Blacas bears me, is the sole cause of my return.”

“ Blacas, then, has great influence with the king?”

“ Inconceivable influence. Louis XVIII sees, and acts only through him.”

“ You may be very useful to the emperor, if you will be sincere.”

“ In what way?”

“ By informing him of all that is doing in Ghent, and all the plots that are hatching against him.”

“ That is to say, in plain terms, you wish me to be guilty of treason.”

“ Oh, you use harsh words. Serve us and we will serve you.”

Count Regnault would fain have extorted any secret from me, for the benefit of his master. When he found he could get nothing out of me

by fair words, he tried to intimidate me. "I am afraid," said he, "his majesty will take the advice of the Duke of Otranto, and that you will be lodged in Vincennes, or some other state prison."

"I should not much like that, to be sure; but a few weeks will soon be over."

"What do you mean by that?"

"I mean that Napoleon will not play the emperor much longer."

"Madam, do you know you are using very dangerous language?"

"I am merely expressing my opinion. Napoleon has so many enemies, both at home and abroad, that he cannot long hold his skeleton of an empire."

We had now reached my house, and Count Regnault took his leave, requesting permission to call upon me at another time.

CHAPTER XIX.

Fouché's Memorial to the king.—Anecdote of Augereau.—The treatment he experiences from Bonaparte.—Count Fabre de l'Aude.—Baron de La Rochefoucauld.—I receive a letter from the king.—I communicate it to Fouché.—Treaty of peace between the Emperor of Austria and Napoleon.

It was not long before I paid another visit to Fouché. He told me that all was going on well, advised me to act with prudence in order that Napoleon's suspicions might not be confirmed, and added that the nominations of the chamber of representatives, which were then proceeding, did not answer the wishes of the emperor. According to Fouché, almost all the deputies would be chosen from amongst the old republicans. I expressed my fears respecting such a selection; but Fouché told me that, on the contrary, much was to be hoped from the absurdities of which they would not fail to be guilty.

He afterwards gave me the Memorial which he had drawn up for the king; it was very long. Fouché suggested a course which the monarchy could not accede to. He wanted pledges which it was impossible to grant. He proposed that the clergy should be deprived of all their influence; that the turbulent nobility of the provinces

should be restrained by force, and that the old functionaries should be re-instated in office. A standing army was to be maintained, and the half-pay officers called into active service. To defray this expense an extraordinary loan was to be raised from the capitalists. The old *noblesse* were to be seldom received at court, the orders of St. Louis and the Holy Ghost were to be suppressed, ministers were to be selected from amongst men of the new *régime*, the French flag was to be tri-coloured, ornamented with the fleurs de lis in gold, and the staff surmounted by an eagle : thus the emblems of royalty and of the empire would be combined together to the general satisfaction. The tricoloured was to be the national cockade. The establishment of the civic guards was to be made permanent. The sittings of the chamber of peers were to be public, and the chamber of deputies was to be augmented by two or three hundred members. Almost all Fouché's propositions were of this nature. A little paragraph followed, couched in the following terms :—

“ Whatever sacrifices your majesty may make to circumstances, they will signify little if your majesty do not banish from your august person, a man whom modern France cannot behold without suspicion. It cannot be concealed, Sire, that the fact of M. de Blacas still enjoying your

majesty's favour is an insurmountable barrier to any arrangement. Whether justly or unjustly, he is not liked. Moreover he is considered utterly incapable of being at the head of the government, of which he boasts of having the exclusive control. Hence it is, that M. de Blacas is blamed for all the faults that have been committed, and fresh ones are apprehended if he should return with you. The interests of the state, the dignity of the throne, no longer permit an individual to interpose himself between you and the nation. It is necessary that France should be satisfied that she is no longer to be governed by M. de Blacas. Be pleased, Sire, to consult your able servants respecting what I have the honour to submit to your majesty. All will hold the same opinions as I do."

There was in this paragraph no less address than truth. I was delighted to have it in my power to send to the king a Memorial, of which certain passages so strongly supported my views, and which was at once calculated to serve my interests as well as those of the monarchy. I accordingly sent Fouché's Memorial to the Prince de Poix, who had promised to convey to the king any thing which I wished not to be seen by M. de Blacas. This document was of course a thing to be kept secret from the favourite.

I neglected nothing that could be serviceable

to our cause. I wished to see Marshal Augereau, who I knew was dissatisfied with Bonaparte. In 1814 the marshal had acted with great insolence to his old master. Not content with insulting him in a proclamation, he addressed him in the most disrespectful style on his passage to Valence. On Napoleon's return, Colonel Lecronier of the gendarmerie, (who is a man of intelligence and elegant manners, though that is nothing to the purpose here) was sent to Rouen to sound the disposition of Marshal Augereau. As soon as the marshal saw him, he exclaimed: "Have you come to arrest me?"

"No, Sir, but merely to enquire whether you intend to return to your old friend; to him to whom you owe your fortune?"

"I fear he will never forgive me; though all I wish is to obtain his pardon. I gave myself up to the Bourbons, like a fool. Men of my stamp should only serve their equals. I will go to Paris, and you may assure the emperor of my fidelity."

M. Lecronier, from whom I had these particulars, smiled with contempt on hearing this, and replied that he was directed to accompany him on his journey.

"Well," said Augereau, "let us set off immediately."

After publishing against the Bourbons a pro-

clamation as violent as that which he had issued, in the preceding year, against the emperor, Augereau left Rouen. On his arrival in Paris he presented himself to Napoleon, who said to him :

“ What are you here, base unprincipled man? you who have always shewn yourself ready to serve the existing power, whatever it might be ! I know you now ; and I will have nothing more to do with you.”

Thereupon the emperor turned his back upon the marshal, who was thunderstruck at his reception. Augereau afterwards endeavoured to communicate with Bonaparte through several of his comrades, but the emperor remained inflexible.

It may naturally be supposed that Augereau felt deeply indignant at his disgrace ; but a heart like his was incapable of courageous revenge. I saw him at the residence of one of my friends, where I invited him to meet me. I questioned him respecting his projects and his hopes ; but I found him entirely wrapped up in himself. He was alike afraid of the king and of Bonaparte. It was impossible to make any thing of such a man.

I also saw Count Fabre de l'Aude. He was an imperialist in appearance ; but a royalist in heart. He appeared to me chagrined at having

accepted a peerage from Napoleon, and was secretly disposed to serve the royal cause. He had passed through the revolution without taking part in any of its excesses. He had been a member of all the finance committees, and when every one around him was robbing and pillaging, Count Fabre was remarkable for his irreproachable probity. The emperor engrossed his talents in the Senate. The king called him to the chamber of peers; and the emperor on his return restored his titles. Count Fabre doubtless did wrong in accepting them; but one must not be too severe upon a man so distinguished for loyalty and integrity.

Being disposed to venture every thing in support of the king's cause, he united his efforts with those of Baron de la Rochefoucauld. The baron, the least known of all the members of his illustrious family, was not for that reason the least worthy of distinction. He possessed talent, unblemished moral character, and tried fidelity. He had a wife truly worthy of him; an amiable, affectionate, charitable woman, doing good by stealth and dreading to be detected in acts of benevolence. To know her was to love and admire her. I had long enjoyed the happiness of her acquaintance. Towards all the family of Rochefoucauld I entertain sentiments of the

highest respect, which I am happy to take this opportunity of expressing.

Whilst the Baron and Count Fabre were mutually exerting themselves in behalf of our legitimate sovereign, I received towards the end of April a letter from his majesty, which I trust the reader will not be sorry to be made acquainted with :

“ Many thanks, my very faithful friend, for the zeal you evince in my cause. Heaven grant that your efforts may not prove useless, and that it may speedily be in my power to secure the happiness of the French nation, and to enjoy your delightful society; but for this purpose it is necessary that my friends should redouble their zeal in Paris. They must endeavour to excite the nation against the usurper of my crown; for I place little reliance on the sovereigns my allies. They are all, I suspect, more influenced by cupidity than by the desire of serving me.

“ See the Duke of Otranto as often as you can; induce him to make every effort to hasten my return. Tell him that he has an opportunity of proving his fidelity, by restoring me to France, and assure him that my gratitude shall be boundless.

“ I will consent to any conditions, which I

consider just. I will sacrifice private friendship to the public good. Give this letter to the Duke of Otranto; I wish it to remain in his hands as a guarantee for the fulfilment of my pledge.

“ Farewell, dearest countess. Though under the necessity of abandoning one of my most faithful friends, do me the justice to believe that my affection remains unaltered, as I hope one day to convince you.

“ I pray God to have you in his holy keeping &c.”

I read this letter with extreme dissatisfaction. I saw that foreigners were doing every thing to render our royal family hateful to France. I was not less vexed to see the king deliver himself up to Fouché, bound as it were, hand and foot, and solemnly sacrificing to him the most sacred feelings of decorum; even the disgrace of M. de Blacas, an event so much to be desired, did not, in my eyes, compensate for these misfortunes.

However, in obedience to the king's orders, I waited on the Duke of Otranto and I gave him the letter of which I had taken a copy. He read it twice over and I observed him the while. His countenance, notwithstanding the gratification he must have felt, was cold and immoveable as marble. At length he said:

“ Nothing could be better, the king speaks

decidedly, and I unhesitatingly vouch for the success of our cause. Poor M. de Blacas! He is lost! What will become of him?"

After some jeering remarks, Fouché rose, went to his secretaire, took out a sheet of paper and said to me:

"I wish you would send this to the king in exchange for his letter. It will help to convince him of the good faith of certain allies."

"What is it duke?"

"Only the treaty concluded between the Emperor of Austria and Napoleon before the latter left the island of Elba."

"You jest—It is not possible!"

"I assure you, Madam, this copy is transcribed from the original, which is in the possession of Count Regnault de St. Jean d'Angely. It is worth while to let the King of France see this curious document."

I was confounded; and Fouché apparently perceived the effect which the communication had upon me.

"Make yourself easy," said he, "I anticipate much from the disagreement, which will arise, between Bonaparte and the chamber of representatives. They will come to the assembly, as I told you, with perfectly republican ideas, which Napoleon will wish to modify; and thus he will become involved in a contest, by which

he will forfeit his empire. I am trying to get Languinais the Breton, chosen president of the chamber. He is as firm as a rock, and will create opposition by his obstinacy."

I left Fouché, for I was impatient to read, at my leisure, the paper he had given me. It was, in reality, a formal treaty concluded between General Koller, in the service of the court of Austria, and General B...., in the service of Napoleon. The document was as follows, with the exception of the preamble, which I omit.

1st, Their majesties of Austria and France, anxious to renew those family ties which nothing ought to have interrupted, henceforth pledge themselves to maintain peace and amity with each other, and promise that their interests shall not again be separated.

2d, The emperor Napoleon having manifested the design of declaring war against Louis XVIII, his intention shall meet with no opposition on the part of his majesty Francis II.

3d, His Apostolic Majesty will order his forces to advance, and take up a position on the frontiers of France, as soon as the Emperor Napoleon shall have landed. This movement, apparently made with the view of concurring in the measures to be adopted by the allies, will in fact have for its object only to secure France against foreign invasion.

4th. His Apostolic Majesty will furnish a hundred thousand men to his Majesty the Emperor Napoleon ; but the latter is not to claim the fulfilment of this clause of the treaty, until after hostilities shall have commenced, and the first battle have been fought.

5th. Immediately after the general peace, his Majesty the Emperor Francis II will authorise the departure of her imperial highness the Archduchess Maria Louisa and his Majesty the King of Rome, his august grandson.

6th. That young prince shall retain the title of King of Rome, but it shall not descend to his children.

7th. His Majesty the Emperor Napoleon renounces for himself and his heirs the title of King of Italy, and all pretension to the countries, states, and duchies, beyond the Alps. He promises to guarantee to his Apostolic Majesty, the free and undisputed possession of the Duchies of Milan and Parma, and of the Terra Firma states of Venice.

8th. He likewise renounces the possession of Tuscany, which is to belong to its present sovereign, the Archduke Ferdinand Joseph Baptiste Charles. He renounces the Duchy of Lucca, which is to remain the property of the Prince of Spain, formerly King of Tuscany, and Duke of Parma in right of his father.

9th. He renounces Piedmont, which is to remain in the possession of the house of Savoy, and in case of the extinction of that family, the succession of the kingdom shall be regulated with reference to the rights of all parties.

10. He renounces Belgium ; but he may extend his frontiers to the boundary of the Rhine.

11th. He engages to pay his Apostolic Majesty two hundred millions of francs, for the expenses of the war, at the rate of one hundred millions of francs per annum, and the first payment shall be made before the 5th of July 1815.

12th. His Apostolic Majesty promises, that after war is declared, he will not lay down his arms, until all the monarchs of Europe have acknowledged the legitimacy of the Emperor Napoleon's title to the throne of France.

13th. His Majesty the Emperor Napoleon engages that, within six months subsequent to his re-union with her Majesty the Empress, his wife, that princess shall be crowned with all due solemnity. He will establish a law of the state, which, in case of his decease, which Heaven forbid, will convey to the Empress Maria Louisa, the Regency with full powers.

14th. The present treaty shall be exchanged &c."

Such was the secret treaty which, from the

month of October, had bound the Emperor of Austria and Napoleon. All circumstances prove the existence of this alliance, as I shall have occasion to shew in the progress of these Memoirs.

CHAPTER XX.

The acte additionnel.—Votes of adherence.—The vote in favour of Franconi.—The Champ de Mai.—The chamber of peers.—The chamber of representatives.—Waterloo.—Its consequences.—Fouché's visit to me.—My letter to the king.—Count Fabre de l'Aude.—Letters from the Prince de Poix.

I SENT the king the paper, the contents of which I have given above, and at the same time I wrote to inform his majesty of what I was doing for him. Matters did not proceed as I could have wished. La Vendée rose once again, and fought with the same courage, but not with the same enthusiasm as before. There prevailed throughout our party an indecision and inactivity, which afforded but little hope for the success of the royal cause. The energetic resistance of the few was discouraged by the inertness of the great mass, or defeated by the bayonets of the army.

At this juncture preparations were made for the famous Champ de Mai, the solemnity at

which the liberties of France were to be proclaimed, that is to say, the oath was to be taken in favour of the old constitutions enriched by an additional act, the whole secret of which was in the last article, *the exclusion of the legitimate family*.

It was resolved that the people, who were at all events, to play a prominent part in the farce, should approve Napoleon's act by their individual votes, as they had formerly voted in favour of his accession to the empire. Registries were opened in all the prefectures, mayoralties, and public offices. The journals proclaimed the eagerness with which the votes of adherence were given; but little was said of the negative votes, of which there were some, though but a small number. On the evening of the 1st of May, a friend came to shew me the following vote, which had been inscribed that morning at the prefecture of the Seine :

“ I, the undersigned, by virtue of the portion of sovereignty, which was promised me in 1792, which I was choused out of in 1800, which was solemnly taken from me by a senatus consultum in 1804; which was restored to me by a proclamation of the 1st of March 1815; which has been again taken from me by an additional act of the 22nd of April last, and which I will resume

whenever I have power to do so, and think it worth while,

“ Reject the additional act, the constitutional act, and every thing that may ensue from it;

“ 1st Because Napoleon himself acknowledges, that his government is only a dictatorship imposed by force, and because the right of a conqueror and that of a legislator are not the same;

“ 2nd, Because the liberty of Bonaparte is a mere jest;

“ 3rd, Because Bonaparte's equality is that of helots and galley-slaves;

“ 4th, Because Bonaparte's peerage is an absurd saturnalia;

“ 5th, Because the hereditary peerage of Bonaparte is an insult to future ages;

“ 6th, Because the exercise of the right of thinking, speaking, and writing, under Bonaparte, is a mere trap for the unwary;

“ 7th, Because the vote of the people will be an illusion;

“ 8th, Because the vote of public functionaries will be a mockery;

“ 9th, Because the vote of the army will be contrary to all moral ideas, and dangerous to all the fundamental principles of nations;

“ 10th, Because the impertinent restriction of article 67 is the clumsy precaution of a suspi-

cious tyranny, and can obtain support only from its accomplices.

“ As, however, the martial character of the nation, and the alternately heroic and burlesque part which France has maintained on the scene of Europe, for the last twenty-five years, demand that we should have a sovereign who can ride well on horseback, I propose **FRANCONI**.”

Paris, May 1, 1815.

I thought I could guess the writer of this ironical note, and I was not wrong. It bore the mark of the author of the *Napoleone*, whose accusatory verses denounced the ambition of Bonaparte, when first consul. I could not resist the desire of seeing him, and I wrote him a note; which was carried to him next morning by a faithful messenger. He came, but had I met him by mere accident, I should never have recognized the bold conspirator, the brother of Oudet. On first presenting himself to me, he appeared to labour under a certain degree of timidity; but that gradually wore off. He soon became animated, and his eloquent indignation afforded me some consolation amidst our royalist misfortunes. But, by a singular fidelity of friendship, his political anger was directed exclusively against Bonaparte. Whenever any harsh observations escaped me against certain Séides of the Empire, I

perceived that they had in him a devoted advocate, ready to find excuses for all their faults. One was his friend, another his benefactor, a third, the friend of his friend, and a fourth the friend of his benefactor. Indeed, he disliked Bonaparte only as a personification of despotism and usurpation. In fine, being proscribed himself, or on the point of being so, he already meditated his generous remonstrance in favour of those who were yet to be proscribed by the then triumphant and menacing party.

However, some days after this his royalist enthusiasm experienced fresh excitement and we were indebted to him for a philippic which we had printed, and of which we circulated upwards of forty thousand copies.*

If we had our protestations in prose, we also had our chansonniers, who directed the shafts of their ridicule against Bonaparte in a way that formed a striking contrast to the hymns of the Champ-de-Mai.

At length the grand day arrived when the great captain was again to shew himself in full state. However, the ceremony was devoid of dignity and grandeur. I, in common with all Paris, witnessed this last parade of the Empire. I wished to form my own opinion of the effect

* "Bonaparte on the 4th of May."

it would produce on the people. Every one looked on coldly and indifferently. That population, lately so restless and impetuous, seemed plunged into the apathy of servitude, and like the ass in the fable, to care but little which master's burden they bore. That day I felt the full force of the Marquis de Chauvelin's remark:—"The people have tendered their resignation."

At the conclusion of this comedy, and before he quitted the scene, Napoleon wished to install the two chambers. This was by no means an agreeable task to him. He nominated to the Chamber of Peers several individuals whom he knew to be not very favourable to him; but at that critical moment it was necessary to make concessions to all parties. However, he gratefully thought of some who had served him well since his return. Thus he granted the honours of the peerage to Charles de Labédoyère, who had been the first to abandon the royal cause. Alas! poor Charles! to my ears his name still had a charm in it. If I could imagine Labédoyère to be no longer a royalist name, I might suspect even the steadiness of my own royalist feelings. I shuddered at his desertion and yet I did not then foresee all its fatal consequences.

From the first moment of its installation, the chamber of representatives was a source of an-

noyance to Napoleon. It was intimated, in the first place, that chamberlains were not the fit intermediaries between the assembly of representatives and the throne. Servants, it was said, could not with propriety address the emperor in the name of the representatives of the nation, and it was required that the ministers should in future be sent. The chamber next proposed the abolition of titles, which was a first step of opposition to the additional act. The motion did not pass. It was merely agreed that, during the sittings, the deputies should be designated by their family names only. Fouché secretly instigated all this rebellion and daily stirred up some fresh vexation for Napoleon. The latter became furiously enraged and exclaimed before Cambacérès: "Let me gain but one victory and I will silence them: two victories, and I will send them about their business. Duke of Parma, on my return I will give you work enough to do." He roared out this in a voice of thunder and his eyes flashed fire as he spoke.

He left Paris. I need not attempt to describe the events of that great war of a few days. I need not tell how Napoleon lost the battle of Waterloo, first by the defection of Count Bourmont, who, on the eve of the engagement, went over to the enemy; and next, as it was said at

the time, by the fault of General Grouchy, who, notwithstanding the ability of which he had so often given proof, caused the loss of the battle, and consequently the fall of the empire. What various and profound emotions did I experience when I received the intelligence of that ever celebrated event. How many brothers, wives and sisters deplored the loss of all that were dear to them ! But the monarchy was victorious. Nothing now opposed the return of Louis XVIII, and I could not help rejoicing at an event which filled many hearts with sorrow. The day before Waterloo, I would have given my life for Napoleon's defeat : the day after, my joy was mingled with regret.

The day after the battle of Waterloo, Fouché called upon me : " Well," said he, " all is over, Napoleon is lost—lost without redemption. He can no longer remain in France."

" Whither will he go?"

" Wherever he likes ; no matter where. He may be safely allowed to remain here, for he is without influence and is no longer to be feared. I am going to send a courier to the king. Do you write to him also, and above all things recommend prudence and activity. He must come immediately ; for if he loses time I will not answer for his being permitted to return. But, in the name of all he holds dear, let him not bring back Blacas. We will have nothing to do

with men of the old system. If he wishes to reign, he must reign by men of the new school. Those alone who had power to make him fall have power to support him. You will do well to tell him this."

Though I was not in all respects of Fouché's opinion, yet I did not contradict him. I here subjoin the letter which I wrote to the king. The sentiments it contains are those which I have sincerely professed, and shall continue to profess throughout my life.

" Sire,

" The moment is at hand when your majesty will re-ascend the throne of your ancestors. As I have not been the least sensible to your misfortunes, I do not wish to be the last to congratulate you on being once again called to watch over the happiness of your subjects. You reproached me, as well as others, for having at a fatal moment concealed the truth from you ; but now, since happier days have returned, I will, even though I should incur your displeasure, tell you the whole truth. I will speak out without reserve, for your majesty's glory is more dear to me than my own interest.

" It is proposed that you should connect yourself with the men of the revolution. Consider, Sire, that this will not only be useless, but dangerous to the monarchy. Those men have lost

all credit in France. Why seek such support? Why not rely on your own rights, virtues, and talents? If your majesty should seek a man worthy of your confidence, deign, Sire, to cast your eyes around you, and you will see him whose talent and fidelity entitle him to your notice. The men whom it is proposed that you should adopt as your counsellors will but compromise your majesty's dignity. Your infinite goodness has already afforded too wide a scope for calumniating tongues; they must now be reduced to silence by the firmness of your conduct. This is what France expects of you. France which has too long suffered from the influence of these men, cannot without distrust, see them at the head of affairs.

"This, Sire, is the truth which I promised to tell you. I now beg pardon for my boldness; but I trust you will excuse my presumptuous advice, in consideration of the motives which dictate it. I am not, I know, a great politician, but my heart has sometimes taught me the right course in diplomacy. But, in spite of the good opinion I entertain of this heart, which is wholly yours, I should prefer being guided by your wisdom.

"I am, Sire,

"With the most profound respect, &c."

The rout of Waterloo was felt in Paris: it spread disorder in the city as well as in the camp. Each party formed a government of their own and chose a sovereign after their own taste. Every one proposed and discussed; but no one listened. Count Fabre de l'Aude, who was now wholly devoted to the king, said on this occasion to some one who repeated his observations to me: "My colleagues are mad: some want the Duke of Orleans,* others the Prince of Orange, some Prince Eugène, others Maria Louisa and her son. They are looking about in search of a sovereign, as if they forgot that we already have a legitimate one. For my part I am ready to propose the proclamation of his majesty Louis XVIII."

Ney himself ventured to pronounce the name of the Bourbons in the chamber.

This plan, though, beyond all contradiction, the best and most reasonable that had been proposed, was not, however, approved by every body.

* "The personal qualities of that prince," said Fouché in his letter to the Duke of Wellington, "the recollections of Jemappes, the possibility of making a treaty which would conciliate all interests, the name of Bourbon which would have weight abroad without being pronounced at home; all these reasons, and others added to them, must afford, in the choice of the Duke of Orleans, the prospect of peace and tranquillity, even to those who do not regard it as the presage of happiness."

Fouché, who, to all appearance, had latterly so well served the king, pretended for a moment to exclude Louis XVIII from the throne. With this view, he caused the nomination of a government committee, consisting of himself, Quinette, Carnot, the Duke of Vicenza and General Count Grenier. It was easy to foresee that a government like this, composed of men of such various opinions, could not act in unison; but Fouché cared not about that. He was solely intent on his own interests, and it must be confessed that he served them well.

At this juncture I received a letter, not from Louis XVIII who, I know not why, observed silence towards me; but from the Prince de Poix. It was dated Cambray June 24th.

“ Thank God ! Madam, we are again in France. Endeavours were made to dissuade the king from returning, but without success. In vain did the ambassadors of certain sovereigns, whom you know, seek to work on the king’s mind by fears and threats. His majesty refused to listen to them. I must not forget to mention to you that, on this occasion, Monsieur evinced an energy worthy of himself, and he contributed not a little to confirm the king in his resolution to return to France.

“ On arriving at Cambray, his majesty, on finding himself once more among his subjects, evinced

a degree of joy, in which I and my companion in exile heartily shared. There was among us an individual who flattered himself, that he returned with the influence he had formerly exercised. But he was soon undeceived. The king explained to him that urgent reasons prevented him from extending towards him the same favour as before. I leave you to guess what was the astonishment of M. de Blacas, on hearing this unexpected news. He attempted to justify himself: "My dear Blacas," said Louis XVIII, interrupting him, "you have no need of justification. I accuse you of nothing; I am not offended with you. I still love you with all my heart; but France is averse to my shewing you favour. I know you well enough to feel assured that you will not, in present circumstances, involve me in a contest with my subjects on your account. This separation is not more painful to you than to me. But it is necessary, and we must submit. M. de Blacas saw that his fate was decided; he, therefore, resigned himself to the sort of exile to which he was condemned, and he has now set sail for England. I wish him a pleasant voyage.

"The departure of M. de Blacas will not derange matters, and we shall be in Paris as soon as possible. M. de Chateaubriand returns with us, but it would appear that clouds are

daily gathering over his head. He seems to lose credit in proportion as he deserves to gain it. Between you and me, I think there is a little ingratitude in the world. I hope that when we get home, you will exert yourself for our friend. I have said enough, perhaps, too much; but I can rely on your discretion. I have still a word or two to say, which must be secret."....

.....
I suppress the few last words of this letter, as the prince trusted to my secrecy. They refer entirely to political matters. The Prince de Poix did not enjoy any great reputation for talent, yet he nevertheless wrote shrewdly and gracefully. He was reproached for democratic opinions at the beginning of the revolution, because he did not reject what was good in the new order of things. At the restoration, the liberals styled him an ultra, because he was a sincere royalist. In times of excited feeling, the moderate man is always wrong. Moderation in politics, is what M. Viennet called *faire la chouette à tous les partis*.

CHAPTER XXI.

The king at Saint-Ouen.—The officer commanding the barrier post.—Madame de Sal...t seized by the Prussian soldiery.—My visit to the king.—Fouché's interview.—The king and M. de—Chamber of representatives.—Second return of his majesty.—Carnot and Fouché.

At length, every obstacle to the king's return was removed, and his majesty, following the dictates of his courage and discretion, continued his advance towards Paris. Those members of the alliance, who were not exactly friendly to the return of Louis XVIII, did not care to express their dissatisfaction at that event, when they perceived that England and Russia were determined to abide by him. The king accordingly returned a second time to Saint-Ouen. There they waited until the gates of his capital should be opened by his subjects. He had already issued a proclamation, in which he declared, with generous candour, that there had been faults in his system of government, which he would correct.

Meanwhile the gates of Paris remained closed. Fouché was not inclined to let the king return to his good city, until he himself dictated the conditions of his re-entrance. Marshal Davoust,

who had been appointed general-in-chief of the French troops, treated for the surrender of Paris; and his army fell back upon the banks of the Loire, where it maintained a threatening aspect to the last moment. The Parisian national guards still preserved a hostile attitude, and the Duke de Choiseul, their general, declared that he would never abandon the tricoloured cockade.

I should find it difficult to express the pain all this caused me. In the midst of my distress, M. de Lamelle, one of my friends, called upon me.

“Have you heard what has happened?” said he. “The royal family is disgraced; Fouché is to be made prime minister on the king’s return.”

“Impossible!” I exclaimed. “That can never happen if Louis XVIII be the brother of Louis XVI, and Madame Royale the daughter of Marie Antoinette.”

“Well,” resumed M. de Lamelle, “that, with which you are so justly horror-struck, will nevertheless take place. I know it for a certainty, and you will see that I am right.”

I could no longer restrain my impatience, but seizing M. de Lamelle by the arm, I said: “Let us go to the king, he will not refuse to see me; and I will either incur his displeasure, or turn him from this step.”

I confess that I gave no credit to the story of

Fouché's appointment. There are some things which though perfectly possible one cannot easily believe. M. de Lamelle and I set out immediately. On arriving at the barrier, the national guard on duty refused to allow us to pass. I was obliged to address myself to an officer commanding the post, who I suppose was an honest tradesman of the Rue Saint-Denis, for he was remarkable for a sort of shopkeeper politeness. He asked me, where I was going with my *companion*. I replied that I was going to Saint-Ouen, with the gentleman, who was my friend.

"To Saint-Ouen, Madam!" cried he, "may I inquire whom you are going to see there?"

"The king, your master and mine. I trust Sir, you will not now refuse to let me pass."

On hearing this the grenadier of the Rue Saint-Denis bowed profoundly, and assured me of his fidelity to the king, gave me his address, and allowed me to continue my journey; at which my *companion* and I were very well pleased.

Beyond the barriers we met several persons of our acquaintance, who like ourselves had succeeded in escaping from Paris, and were going to pay their homage to the king. Among others I observed poor Marignié, straining his throat with exclamations of *Vive le Roi!* He was trudging on foot; so I offered him a seat in my carriage, which he accepted. The road was thronged with

allied troops. They did not attempt to annoy us, and we reached Saint-Ouen without any interruption. This might be considered fortunate, for that same morning some ladies of my acquaintance met with a very unpleasant adventure.

Madame de Salt, who might be called a royalist *par excellence*, accompanied by her two daughters, set out on a pilgrimage to Saint-Ouen. They had scarcely proceeded half a league from the barrier, when they were surrounded by a party of Prussian soldiers. The officers seized the ladies, who said in vain that they were not for the emperor—that they were royalists in heart and soul. They were not attended to, but were carried away like criminals and treated *à la Prussienne*.

On my arrival at Saint-Ouen, I called on the Prince de Poix, who expressed himself delighted to see me.

“Heaven grant,” said he, “that you have come in time! I am most anxious that you should speak to the king before the fatal visit he is about to receive.”

“What visit?” I enquired.

“Do not you know? Fouché’s. We are all in fear of it: you alone can counteract its effect. Follow me—you shall be announced immediately.”

We were soon at the door of his majesty’s cabinet. One of the ushers, who owed his place

to me was in attendance, and he asked me what he could do for me? I replied that I only wished him to open the door. He did so immediately. While the Prince de Poix was hesitating whether or not he should enter, I went in. His majesty happened at that moment to look round. Perceiving me, he smiled, beckoned to me to advance, and in a moment I was at his feet.

"How now, rebel! are you here?" exclaimed the king, "you, who have revolted against my absolute will?"

"Sire," replied I, "a constitutional king should reign by the law and not by his will."

"Well, well," continued the king, "you have served me most zealously, and I thank you for it. It was the more meritorious in you, because I know you did not like your mission."

"Consider, Sire, that that mission separated me from you. Besides I felt piqued at being sacrificed for a man...."

"Hush, he is not here. We must not speak ill of the absent."

"I do not wish to speak ill of him, Sire, for after all he was better than the man with whom you are threatened. When I think of the Duke of Otranto, I adore M. de Blacas."

The king smiled at the warmth with which I expressed myself, and then he said in a tone of mildness of which I was not the dupe:

“ Hear what I have to say to you. Your society affords me the greatest pleasure. I am charmed with your conversation; but I should like you much better if you would refrain from meddling with state affairs. Your friends no doubt, advise you as their interests suggest, but I have to consult the interests of France. Be prudent, therefore, and do not oblige me to quarrel with you a second time.”

The tone in which Louis XVIII uttered these words completely disarmed the courage which I had summoned for this interview. He spoke to me of the embarrassment of his situation with regard to the allies. I thought that he expressed himself with some degree of warmth against Prussia and Austria, and he acknowledged to me that he had read, with indignation, the secret treaty which I had sent him. We were still talking together when the Duke of Otranto was announced. On hearing his name the king turned pale, and I felt the blood mounting to my face. I immediately quitted the room; but I am nevertheless enabled to give an account of that celebrated interview. Louis XVIII subsequently condescended to relate to me all that passed, and the accuracy of his memory may be relied upon.

After presenting his respects to the king and making him acquainted with the state of things

in Paris, Fouché asked his majesty if he had read his last Memorial.

"Yes, Sir," replied Louis XVIII. "I have read it and reflected upon it. It presents great difficulties."

"Consider, Sire, that circumstances are dangerous. You can only reign by satisfying those who overthrew you."

"That is a strange necessity: it would seem more natural to punish them."

"Certainly, Sire, that would be advisable if their numbers were small; but, unfortunately, such is not the fact. In the first place, they have for them the army: then, there is a great portion of the public functionaries, the purchasers of national property, persons of note in all the towns of France, lawyers and merchants, who have decidedly adopted the new ideas. Your majesty must not rely on the old noblesse, who are utterly devoid of power and influence, nor on the clergy, who are likely to be more injurious than useful to the monarchy. You saw, Sire, what mischief they did in 1814."

Fouché then drew a frightful picture of the state of affairs, so that Louis XVIII, already prepossessed in his favour, and convinced of his great political knowledge, conceived it to be indispensably necessary for the safety of the monarchy

to admit him to his confidence. He therefore, promised to make Fouché, not president of the ministry, but minister of the general police, at the same time giving him reason to hope that he should still retain the supremacy in the council. Fouché sought no better. Before he left the king he stated that he had dissolved the government committee, and that, as to the representatives, he would prevent them from holding their sittings by stationing troops at the approaches to the Palais Bourbon.

During this long conference I was in an adjoining room, anxiously awaiting its result. I could not endure the thought of seeing a regicide become the minister of a king of France. I felt distressed and ashamed that the monarchy should consent to such a degradation. I even caught myself shedding tears, when I was surprised by the entrance of a man who may rank among the most illustrious of our age. He perceived my grief, asked me the cause of it, and when I told him, he shared my indignation and proposed to go immediately and speak to the king. I pointed out to him the uselessness of so doing, but he replied: "No matter, I will speak to him. Now or never is the time to follow the maxim,—*fais ce que dois, advienne que pourra*. I should think myself criminal if I allowed his majesty

to adopt such a measure without opposing it with all my might." Thereupon this loyal servant of the king left me.

His functions gave him the right of entrance to the royal chamber, and he accordingly gained access to Louis XVIII without difficulty. Then ensued between the king and him a scene which I shall never forget. He conjured his majesty to alter his determination, in the name of all that was venerable and sacred on earth. He fearlessly painted the consternation which would fill the minds of all true Frenchmen, when they should behold at the head of affairs a man tainted with blood, a murderer of Louis XVI in the councils of Louis XVIII; a murderer of Marie-Antoinette in the presence of her brothers-in-law and her daughter; and when the king replied that necessity compelled him to adopt the measure, he exclaimed that it became a prince like Louis XVIII to sacrifice the throne for virtue. At length the king, weary of a resistance which he felt was degrading to him, closed the conversation by saying: "Leave me, Sir!"—"Yes, Sire, I go; but not as a minister, merely as a faithful subject. I beg your majesty will permit me to resign the portfolio with which you entrusted me." Thus ended the interview between my illustrious friend and Louis XVIII.

This was not the only opposition which the king experienced. The royal family firmly resisted the elevation of Fouché. I have been informed that an august personage said to Louis XVIII: "Sire, you can sign the appointment of Fouché only on the Place Louis XV, and in view of the expiatory monument."

Madame Royale did not dissemble the horror with which this choice inspired her. She declared to the king her uncle, that she would fly to the extremities of the kingdom to avoid the hated presence of Fouché.

I have every reason to believe that the king was in his heart dissatisfied with his own conduct. In our daily conversations, he frequently avoided speaking to me respecting that period of his reign, which confirmed me in the idea that the subject was disagreeable to him.

On the morning of the 8th of July the allies entered Paris, no longer as friends but as threatening conquerors. The representatives were preparing to hold their sitting as usual; but when they arrived at the Place du Palais-Bourbon, they were not a little astonished to find several detachments of armed troops stationed there to prevent their entering the palace. This was Fouché's precaution. The representatives were highly indignant, and addressed eloquent speeches to the enemy who thus opposed the

business of the state. They even talked of imitating the conduct adopted by the Roman senators on some great occasion or other. But when they saw the soldiers cross their bayonets, their Roman courage was shaken, and they quietly returned to their homes. When I say to their homes, I am wrong; for they all assembled at the house of one of their party, where they signed a protest, which the collectors of curiosities of that kind have carefully preserved.

The 8th of July was also the day of the king's second return to Paris. As the triumphal procession passed along, a singular contrast was observable. On the one hand were the faithful servants of the monarchy, whose countenances beamed with joy and satisfaction, and on the other, the lately rebel military marched with an air of embarrassment like criminals. The assumed joy of their chiefs but ill disguised the remorse that preyed upon their minds. Of all the traitors, Fouché alone seemed perfectly at his ease. His gratified ambition made him rejoice as heartily as the faithful. He did not foresee that his reign was destined to be a short one. His presence at the head of affairs was truly a miracle. It is well known that at this moment he treated his old accomplices with the utmost rigour, to avert suspicion from himself. Carnot wrote to him : " Whither do you

wish me to go, traitor?" to which Fouché insolently replied: "Where you please, fool." These few words sufficiently unmasked the political hypocrisy of Fouché, when he had gained his ends.

CHAPTER XXII.

The allies displeased at the king's return to Paris.—Disbanding of the army earnestly called for.—The bridge of Jena.—Blücher.—Conversation with the king.—Letter to the King of Prussia.—The Emperor Alexander.—The Duchess de Saint-Leu.—Negotiation with the Emperor of Russia.—My interview with his majesty.—Its success.

THE king's entry into Paris thwarted many plans. Fouché would fain have represented the king in the capital, and reigned in his stead, whilst he kept his majesty in a state of exile. The allies too, who wished to trample upon conquered France, and to reduce her to a state of weakness from which she could not easily recover, were mortified to see Louis XVIII place himself between them and his subjects, and thus force them into measures of propriety and decorum which did not accord with their policy.

The wise course adopted by Louis XVIII removed many difficulties; but there still remained

many more to be surmounted. The king had to contend against three parties, the two principal of which, the liberals, and the ultras, seemed determined to wage war against each other. The moderates, who formed the third party, were weak and insignificant, and were driven, by fear, to take refuge, alternately, in the two hostile camps. Besides, the king could not, as on his first return, adopt conciliatory measures. All about him raised the cry of revenge. "It is," they said, "indispensably necessary to punish treason and felony, and to purge the kingdom of the impure dregs of the revolution. It is especially necessary to reign, in the military spirit of the empire, and to annihilate the last remaining vestige of the old army, which is to be considered as the instrument of the second usurpation of its old chief." Courtiers and statesmen were unanimous on this point. It was the measure, on which the allies urged repeated solicitations, which, at length, assumed the appearance of formal commands. To nothing did they attach so much importance as the annihilation of those heroic bands, who had planted the tri-coloured flag, in all the capitals of Europe. They hoped that, after the disbanding of her army, France would cease to have any weight in the political balance. In vain, did those who still respected the glory of our prætorian army entreat

that it might be spared ; they found themselves obliged to elude the real question, and take refuge in vague generalities. " Let it not be imagined," said they, " that a new army can be formed out of these scattered wrecks. Each of our old soldiers considers his regiment as his native country, and his comrades as his brothers. It might as well be expected, that after breaking up all civic bonds, tearing from their homes, and confounding together the inhabitants of Paris, Lille, Strasburgh, Bordeaux and all parts of France, they could be sent back at hazard to occupy those different towns."

The king himself was far from being insensible to these considerations, and he did not conceal his repugnance to the projected disbanding. I took an opportunity of questioning him on the subject.

" The total disbanding of the army," said he to me, " may throw France out of her rank among nations."

" But, Sire, that army is essentially rebellious, and may it not do again, six months hence, what it has already done."

" No ; the question now assumes a new form. The contest is no longer between the old chief of the army and me, but between the enemy and the King of France. On whom can I rely, if we are reduced to the necessity of fighting on

our territory, for its preservation? What shall I be without the army? The captive of my pretended allies. You see what is the conduct of the coalesced powers now, whilst the troops on the banks of the Loire maintain a threatening attitude; judge what it will be, when I shall no longer have it in my power to throw myself into ranks which would always be open to receive me, if I spoke in the name of the country."

The conduct of the allies, in 1815, was indeed well calculated to excite alarm. No sooner had the king arrived at the Tuileries, than the Prussians took possession of all the entrances to the palace, turned their artillery against its walls, and lined the gardens with their posts. Thus Louis XVIII was truly a prisoner in his own palace.

Outrage was soon carried to the extremity. The king was informed that the Prussians intended to blow up the bridge of Jena, and that they had already charged a mine for that purpose. On hearing of this insolent project Louis XVIII sent for Field-Marshal Blücher. That commander, who was destitute of any real military talent, set himself up for a great man, on the strength of the error committed by Marshal Grouchy, and he endeavoured, by swaggering, to make up for his want of dignity. Surprised to find himself summoned by Louis XVIII, he presented himself before his majesty with an air

of assumed importance. He not only neglected the usual marks of respect, but he even dispensed with common courtesy. The king pretending not to observe the rudeness of the half savage soldier, said to him in a tone of mildness:

“ Marshal, some enemies of the king, your master, allege that you are, in compliance with his orders, preparing to destroy a monument of my capital, whose name seems to give you offence. I cannot believe this; but as I wish to please all my allies, I have given orders that the bridge of Jena shall henceforth be called the bridge of the military school, and I wished to tell you this myself that you may inform your sovereign of it.”

Blücher, instead of yielding to the conciliatory address of Louis XVIII., replied with all the coarseness of feeling which characterized him :

“ Sire, I cannot allow a monument to exist in Paris, which is an insult to my nation. The bridge of Jena shall be destroyed, and its ruins will prove to posterity that Prussia was not slow in taking her revenge.

“ You are very severe marshal! Are you not satisfied with having entered Paris twice sword in hand? Would you punish the stones for the name which has been given to them?”

“ Bonaparte carried the bronze horses from the triumphal gate of Berlin. A reprisal is necessary.”

"In that case," replied the king with an ironical smile, "it would be better to carry the bridge away with you than to shatter it to pieces."

Blücher, in spite of his coarseness, felt the irony and seemed ashamed of himself. But he repeated that nothing should dissuade him from taking his intended revenge, for all the insults which his country had suffered.

"So," said the king, "you would punish me for the offence for which you reproach another. But I advise you, marshal, to reflect well, before you drive me to extremities; I may take a decisive step, which will at once restore all the dignity of my crown, and place the pretended conquerors of France in a difficult situation."

The king could not restrain this burst of indignant feeling, which got the better of his policy, and he thus spontaneously made amends for his letter to the Prince Regent.

Blücher, who perceived how deeply the king was offended, coldly made his obeisance to his majesty, and withdrew without making any reply. I arrived at this juncture. The king, with considerable warmth of manner, told me what had passed.

"Sire," said I, "your honour demands that you should manifest your opposition to this measure, in as decided a manner as possible, in or-

der to prove to your subjects that the insult, if perpetrated, does not meet with your consent!"

"No, by heaven!" replied the king with vehemence, "I will not suffer my honour to be trampled upon; and I will prove, to those who doubt it, that there is still courage left in this frame, worn out as it is by suffering. I will contend with these barbarians, and if the insult be committed, at least my subjects shall not say that I was a party to it. But let us see whether the King of Prussia will shew himself more reasonable, than his stupid and insolent marshal." He seized a pen and hastily wrote the following note, every line of which remains indelibly fixed in my recollection:

"Sir, my brother,

"Field Marshal Blücher, abusing your orders, commands the destruction of the bridge of Jena, the name of which I have changed to that of the bridge of the military school. This violent proceeding may injure me in the opinion of my subjects, who will believe that I have sanctioned it. It will be derogatory from the dignity of my crown; for I am now in Paris, and I presume that Paris is still my capital. I request that your majesty will interpose your authority—I beg this as a favour; if, however, you do not choose to grant it, I merely entreat that you will let me know

the hour when the bridge is to be blown up, that I may station myself upon it.

Signed "LOUIS."

The king sealed this letter himself, addressed it with his own hand, and dispatched it in all haste to the King of Prussia. At the same time he wrote a letter fully as energetic to the Emperor of Russia, who had just arrived. This soon produced its effect; an hour afterwards, one of Alexander's aides-de-camp brought his answer. He assured the king that the bridge of Jena should be respected. He added: "I have caused Blücher to be informed, that under pain of incurring my personal displeasure, he must refrain from consummating the act of vandalism which he has commenced; and that, should he dare, after my prohibition, to persist in so gross an insult to the King of France, I possess sufficient power to compel him to rebuild the monument at his own expense, and by Prussian workmen." Blücher trembled with rage on receiving this message: he gave vent to his anger but he dared do nothing more. He assured Alexander's messenger that, out of respect to the emperor, he would stop the works of the mine. "Sir," said the Russian messenger, "I have orders to send a detachment of our troops to the bridge, to keep guard conjointly with yours." Blücher, to avoid this disagreeable mea-

sure, solemnly promised to conform, in every respect, to the wish of the Emperor of Russia. The bridge was saved. But the King of Prussia was far from acting like Alexander: his conduct was petty and ungenerous. In the first place he delayed his answer to the letter of the King of France, hoping that the interval of delay would afford time for blowing up the bridge; and when he afterwards learnt the candour and firmness which his ally had shown on the occasion, he evinced ridiculous ill temper. Blücher had already announced his intention of proceeding to disarm the national guard. He wanted to treat Paris, which had opened its gates only in virtue of a capitulation, like a conquered city. But Alexander again interposed his power and decided, that the national guard should be maintained, and treated with the respect it deserved.

Immediately after the king's return I received a note from the Duchess de St. Leu, begging me to come to her. I easily guessed why she wished to see me, and I felt sincere regret at not being able to render her any service. She received me in tears. "Ah, Madam," said she "what will become of me. I am here without protection, exposed to daily humiliation. The agents of the police constantly surround me, as if I alone had brought the emperor back. Yet I assure you, that so far from my being in his good

graces, at the moment of his return, I had to remove unfavourable prejudices which he entertained against me."

"How?" exclaimed I with surprise.

"He reproached me with having remained in Paris instead of following him or rejoining his brother; of having presented myself at the Court of the King of France; and of having accepted the title of Duchess of Saint-Leu. He almost accused me of having taken part against him. He discovered his error and restored to me his friendship; but betrayed as he has been by fortune, and thrown into the power of his enemies, he can no longer protect me. I doubt not that his brother will claim my child, and that I shall be separated from the only being which renders life supportable to me. Madam you have influence with the king; obtain, I entreat you, his permission that I may remain in France. I will live in the strictest retirement and scrupulously avoid giving the least cause of complaint.

"I am deeply sorry," I replied, "for my inability to serve you in this particular; for it is already determined that you are to quit France. The king would willingly have allowed you to remain here unmolested; but this was vehemently objected to. The Duke of Otranto in particular declared himself against you."

"Wretch!" exclaimed Hortense! "Oh that

the emperor had acted on his first impulse, when but a few days since, in a fit of rage, he had well nigh put this traitor out of the way that he might not profit by his perfidy."

I informed the duchess that all I could do was to get the point respecting her child decided in her favour: at least, that I would exert all my endeavours for that object. But, notwithstanding the exclusive affection she had just expressed for her son, she continued to bewail her destiny. I could plainly perceive that the mortification of her fall had been not a little augmented by the revived hopes in which she had indulged during the hundred days.

I left her and proceeded to the king. I related to his majesty my interview with Hortense. He appeared very little affected on hearing of the grief of the princess. His mind was embarrassed by the extravagant pretensions of Prussia and Austria. He complained of the incapacity or apathy of his agents. At length, he asked me whether I should have any objection to wait on the Emperor Alexander, and state to him, on his behalf, matters which he wished neither to write nor deliver from his own mouth. I assured the king that I was ready to do any thing he wished. "Well," said he, "we will talk over the different points of which you must treat with my brother of Russia. It cannot be con-

sistent with a very enlightened policy to reduce France to despair. She is a great nation and more formidable still than her enemies believe."

"But, Sire, will not the Emperor Alexander think it strange, that you should entrust a woman with these important affairs? I fear, I do not look very much like a grave diplomatist."

"Oh! you women want neither *finesse* nor ability. The weight of your influence has not unfrequently been felt in the balance of negotiations. There are many of your sex who would find it no difficult matter to dupe Lord Castle-reagh, and you may successfully vie with the most competent ambassadors."

I promised to use every effort to merit my share of this compliment, and I listened to the king with earnest attention. He gave me his instructions, coming often to the point which he thought most important, and when he had finished, I repeated to him almost word for word, his own observations.

"You justify my hopes," said he. "You will outdo Prince Talleyrand who passes for our most able statesman."

"I may venture to hope for some little success, Sire, if unbounded attachment and the most ardent zeal for your service suffice to obtain it."

The king took my hand, pressed it between his, and raised it to his lips with the most ardent

expression. If his heart did not palpitate at that moment I am strangely deceived.

That same evening I requested an audience of the Emperor Alexander for the next morning at nine o'clock. It was instantly granted. The emperor knew my intimate relation with the king, and he probably suspected that my visit might bear an official character.

I was at the emperor's residence before the hour appointed, and Alexander, who, doubtless, thought with Louis XVIII that *punctuality is the politeness of kings*, did not keep me waiting an instant. He received me with gracious kindness, and in spite of my scruples insisted on my sitting down. He asked me what had procured him the honour of seeing me.

"Sire," I said, "I come to you with confidence as being the most honest member of the coalition. Do not ask whether I have followed my own suggestions, in presenting myself before you, or whether I have been sent. Condescend only to listen to me. Sire, it is proposed to dismember France—every thing is presumed to be possible, because the fortune of war seems to have turned against her. Allow us to think that this may be a mistake. But supposing, for an instant, such an attempt were successful;—what would the allies gain by it? At most some present advantages, which would soon be wrested

from them. The king would be degraded, he would be rendered hateful to his people, and thus the pledge of a solid peace must be forfeited. But you, Sire, what interest can you have in the aggrandizement of the Netherlands, Austria and Prussia? for those are the objects contemplated. Even Spain claims Roussillon and demands the rest of Navarre."

The emperor smiled, doubtless at the way in which I sustained my diplomatic character, but he continued to listen to me.

"I repeat, Sire, can it be for your interest that a kingdom which seems a counterpoise in Europe should be thus enfeebled? Will not England become too formidable when France shall no longer be able to maintain the equilibrium? Can you consent to it? Will your generosity, your policy, permit the throne of Louis XVIII to be degraded, annihilated?"

"It would be very wrong," Alexander at length replied; "it would be a very serious error. But does the king entertain any fear respecting the intentions of the allies?"

"Fear! No, Sire, but melancholy certainty. Your majesty must know this as well as we do."

"Not so, Madam; it is concealed from me. There are things which it is not wished I should know. Each cabinet has its peculiar secrets, which are not disclosed but at the last extremity."

"This fatal project then is one of those secrets; but, Sire, shall we not have your support?"

"My support!" said the emperor, "my support is of little consequence."

"Let us have it, Sire, and we require no other."

"I am," he instantly replied, "entirely disposed to serve the king of France. I did not go to war from ambition, but only to conquer peace, which Bonaparte, while his reign lasted, would have banished from the world. To consolidate peace I have a second time taken up arms. May Heaven," he added, with an air of religious fervour, "see the justness of my design and grant its fulfilment!"

I listened to these words with profound reverence and a pause ensued.

"Madam," he continued, "assure his majesty that I will oppose any attempt to dismember France. Tell him that I will be his good and faithful ally, and that he could not have sent me a more agreeable plenipotentiary."

I blushed on hearing the last words. The emperor took from his finger a magnificent ring:

"It is our custom," said he, "to present a testimony of satisfaction to able negotiators. Therefore allow me, Madam, to request you will wear this ring in remembrance of me."

I threw myself at his feet, weeping for joy. He raised me up and good-naturedly reproached me.

"Sire," I said, "my heart will always preserve the recollection of your magnanimous kindness."

"The King of France is fortunate, Madam, if he can reckon on many such faithful subjects as you."

"He has millions, Sire, who will take up arms in his cause, if his voice, call upon them to defend the honour of his crown."

"Return to the king, Madam, and inform him that he may be easy. I will see him in the course of the day. Tell him to send the Duke de Richelieu to me. He also is a model of fidelity."

I repeated my expressions of gratitude and departed with an alacrity which must have astonished the numerous crowd that was waiting in the ante-rooms. I burned with impatience to inform the king of my success.

CHAPTER XXIII.

My return to the king.—Proscription list.—Fouché.—The king's disclosure.—The new ministry.—Baron Louis.—Baron Pasquier.—Marshal Gouvion St. Cyr.—The king's grief in private.—His portrait.—His compliment to Wellington.—Journals read by the king.—His distrust and precaution on that subject.—Conspiracy in the South.—Plan of a kingdom of Aquitaine.—Letter from a Jesuit.

SOME readers will perhaps call me to account for all that I have not set down in these Memoirs. "You have forgotten," they will say, "to relate such and such an incident—you have neglected such an historical fact—you have scarcely touched upon such another. Why have you not described the last days Napoleon passed in France? Why do you tell us nothing of the King of Prussia, who arrived in Paris at the same time as the Emperor Alexander? Why do you not make us follow the current of political events?" &c. &c. To all this I have only to reply: I have not undertaken to write the history of France. As I said before, I am writing *Memoirs*; and am therefore at liberty to go and to come—to take or to leave things just as I please. I write without books, from my recollection only, without troubling myself either to observe chro-

nological order or to make my narrative accord with the statements of those who have preceded me. It is enough for me to relate what I saw and heard. I care but little for the rest. I however think myself bound to say a few words in explanation of the rapid way in which I have passed through the great epoch of 1815. So much has been written respecting the hundred days, that I deemed it advisable to speak of them but cursorily, and to dwell only on the episodes and intrigues with which the public had not been previously made acquainted. Thus I conceived the plan of my work ; and thus I will continue it, if the reception given to these two first volumes should afford me reason to hope that the public will accept the others. But to return to my triumphant entry to the Tuileries. The king, as soon as he saw me, perceived that my negotiation had been successful " Victory doubtless," exclaimed he, " has been awarded to beauty and the graces !"

" Victory," replied I, " has at least been gained by ardent, and sincere zeal to serve you. " Yes, Sire, the Emperor Alexander is perfectly aware how necessary it is not to suffer powers, already formidable, to gratify their cupidity."

" What did he say ?"

" He has given me the most favourable assurances. He will come himself to renew his pro-

mise of support to you, and he requests you will send to him the Duke of Richelieu."

"The Duke of Richelieu!" replied the king joyfully, "Alexander then is really sincere. Let him but give me his friendly support unreservedly, and we two can silence all the rest."

The king now shewed me the fatal list of the proscriptions which had been judged indispensably necessary. My eyes instantly fell upon a name, the sight of which, in such a place, filled me with grief and horror. I had sufficient presence of mind to suppress my feelings; but I determined within myself to do every thing in my power, even to the abusing of the king's confidence, to save a man who had once been very dear to me, and who still lived in my remembrance, notwithstanding the years, which had elapsed since my thoughtless girlhood. I also found the name of Savary on the list. It was the very last. The king knew it, and when I had ended the painful perusal, he asked me significantly whether I had nothing to say in behalf of my dear friend. "Ah the Duke of Rovigo," said I, recovering from the melancholy reverie into which I had been thrown, on seeing at the commencement of the list the name which will unhappily soon employ my pen. "Is he considered so formidable, Sire?"

“ Formidable! No, that would be too strong a term. But he might possibly prove dangerous. However, he has executed justice on himself; for he is gone off with Bonaparte, and I do not think he will return in a hurry. Thus you have lost a man who was wholly devoted to you.”

“ Certainly, Sire, he has never behaved ill to me, and I should be ungrateful to wish him any harm. At the same time I do not feel any personal regret for him; and as to the fears he seems to inspire, I do not think that he of himself can do any thing to justify them. Left to his own resources, the poor duke would be a very insignificant person.”

In saying this, I wished to serve the Duke of Rovigo, by making the king believe that his insignificancy ought to screen him from punishment, and I thus paved the way for a request which I intended afterwards to make in his favour. To help to disguise the feelings by which I was agitated, I again took up the list and seizing a pen, I sat down at the Hartwell table. “ What would you do, rash creature?” exclaimed the king; “ can it be possible that political animosity would prompt you to swell this terrible list? Such a feeling would be unworthy of you. I am myself deeply distressed at the necessity of appearing thus severe!”

“ It signifies not, Sire. There is one name

wanting in this list—it is that of the Duke of Otranto. Neither I, nor any other person in France would hesitate to pronounce his sentence.”

“ Silence!” said the king, “ you abuse my kindness. There are difficult circumstances in which it is impossible to attend to the dictates of the heart. You could not imagine the obstacles which opposed my return; the Duke of Otranto smoothed them away, by devoting himself to my service.

“ He devote himself, Sire! he is incapable of it. He may sacrifice others to his interest; but the Duke of Otranto can never be animated by the noble fidelity which induces a subject to immolate himself for his sovereign.”

The king yielding to the desire, so natural to the heart of man, of repelling the blame cast upon him, or defending a disputed opinion, related to me some previous circumstances of which I was ignorant, and which perhaps, but for this incident, would ever have remained unknown to me.

The troops cantoned behind the Loire, or on its banks, obstinately refused to submit. Marshal Davoust, their commander-in-chief, judging the moment favourable for promoting his ambitious views, advanced the most extravagant claims upon the king. He required for himself a prin-

ciality, consisting of a department on the sea coast, an annual allowance of twelve hundred thousand francs, to be paid by the nearest receiver-general, and the title of Constable of France. He demanded besides full pay for all the officers then in active service with the army of the Loire, and permission to fix their residence in his new principality, and finally increased pay for the sub-officers, who were likewise to accompany him: if these propositions were rejected, he was to proclaim Napoleon II, and continue the war with all its chances.

The king, on the other hand, knew that the Austrian cabinet had daily communications with Marshal Davoust. Frequent couriers passed to and from his head-quarters. Seeing that Napoleon was now irretrievably lost, the cabinet of Vienna was not disinclined to consent to surrender up the king of Rome to the wishes of the imperialists, on condition that the regency should be intrusted to Maria Louisa, directed by the Austrian ambassador, and protected by an army of occupation, established along the whole of the eastern frontier.

Fouché was the first to discover these secret arrangements, and ventured to transmit to Davoust a declaration, in which the king's handwriting was imitated, and which promised the subsequent fulfilment of all the conditions pro-

posed. This apocryphal document, at first supposed to be authentic, produced the best effects. It calmed the impetuosity of the army, and gave time for entering into the negotiation, which was set on foot between Russia and France. Once secure of such support, the king could disavow the promises falsely made in his name, assume a tone befitting his dignity, bring the Prince of Eckmühl and his generals back to obedience, and make them renounce their menacing conditions. This was the important service, which so powerfully influenced the king's mind in favour of Fouché.

Prince Talleyrand, on his return with the king, could not but be displeased with the turn which affairs had taken. He could not behold with satisfaction the elevation and high credit of Fouché, at the very moment of the total overthrow of all the other men of the revolution. I never took particular notice of the conduct of the prince under these circumstances, but it is certain that, to all external appearance, he favoured the Duke of Otranto. He approved of his admission to the council, and even declared it to be necessary. M. de Chateaubriand, on the contrary, sacrificed his personal advantage rather than compromise with such a man as Fouché, and he refused the portfolio which the king wished to place in his hands. The king, far from being

pleased with this sacrifice, seemed delighted to have a pretext for complaining of him, and thenceforward no longer concealed his displeasure. M. de Chateaubriand was appointed minister of state. He took his place in the privy-council, but he had no active participation in public business.

The king's attention was wholly engrossed in composing the administration. The unfortunate conduct of the Abbé de Montesquiou and M. Dambray, not to apply to it a more severe epithet, was not calculated to induce the king again to call them to the council. The former was dismissed with the promise of a dukedom, which was subsequently given to him, and the latter was made president of the chamber of peers, which was rather a heavy load for his weak head. Prince Talleyrand retained the direction of foreign affairs, and had the title of president of the council. Baron Louis, an ex-abbé, a good calculator, and a sort of amateur stock-jobber, took the finance department. The inevitable Duke of Otranto remained at the head of the police, and Baron Pasquier became keeper of the seals. The baron was a laborious man; he was cut out for a despot, though he has subsequently assumed a tinge of liberalism, by which none but fools can be duped. He must have power, no matter at what price it is obtained. Whether it comes from the right side

or the left, from the liberals or the ultras, he will accept it from whatever quarter it is offered. Such is the character of M. Pasquier, and such it was at the time here alluded to. We did not like him because we suspected him not to be a royalist; but the fact is, he was a better royalist than any of us. As a speaking minister, he was the Castlereagh of the French senate; no man was so clever at evading a question and at a reply.

Marshal Gouvion Saint Cyr succeeded the Duke of Feltre in the war department. He was animated by loyalty and an ardent desire to raise the fallen glory of France, and to deliver her completely from the hands of the coalition. The allies, being unable to gain him over, conspired to ruin him. Such a man was not suited to their purposes. They wanted one more pliant and docile, and they found him.

Count de Jaucourt became minister of the marine. The department of the interior remained provisionally vacant and M. Pasquier filled it *ad interim*. Baron de Vitrolles eagerly wished for, but could not obtain, the portfolio of the interior, which the king destined for M. de Vau-blanc; but before he got it, it passed into the hands of M. de Barante.

The prefecture of police was given to a man whom I had occasion to mention during my visit to Ghent, and who was shortly destined to play a

distinguished part in the state. I allude to M. Decazes. He was then a person of little consequence. In the absence of any real talent he understood thoroughly the art of intrigue, and he availed himself of it to raise his fortune rapidly. I shall soon have occasion to draw his portrait.

But, to what purpose did Louis XVIII make up his ministry? was he really king of France? Did not the allied sovereigns reign more than he did, through the medium of their generals and their ministers? Lord Wellington, Blücher, Count Capo d'Istria, and M. Metternich, imposed harsh laws upon us, and their exactions drained our resources. His majesty had to brook affronts, which were often ill disguised by being offered in an ungenerous way. He had to receive with apparent joy armed allies, who, while they addressed him with the title of sovereign, arrogated to themselves the chief, part of his royal authority. There were moments when the king privately gave way to grief which undermined his physical strength. He wished he had been able, like Henry IV, to take up arms and deliver his kingdom from the power of his pretended foreign friends; but the imperious necessity of policy obliged him to conceal the sorrow of his heart beneath a forced smile, the melancholy expression of which did not escape the eye of the attentive observer.

Louis XVIII was truly a king. He even sa-

crificed some virtues to his kingly character: but his faults have been exaggerated and his good qualities have not received full justice. He has been accused of want of sensibility, and of shewing but little gratitude, for the services which were rendered him. He regarded with too equal an eye the men who had followed him in adversity, and those who flocked round him in prosperity. It would indeed be difficult to extol either his generosity or his sincerity. He did not dispense his gifts with pleasure, and his word was not to be trusted, except in so far as the fulfilment of his promises accorded with the charter. But he was endowed with superiority of understanding, wisdom, and prudence; he understood in perfection the art of temporizing. He well knew, that to gain time was to surmount the greatest difficulties. If he had a bad opinion of men, it was because he knew them well. He possessed a natural dignity which commanded respect. He felt the wants of France, and as to the charter which he gave us, he would have defended it against all opponents, because he conceived it to be necessary. He would fearlessly have shewn himself on the field of battle, if he could have appeared there on horseback, and not in a litter. Foreigners would not have obtained from him any concessions incompatible

with the dignity of his crown, if he had seen the French people firmly united round him. If he yielded, it was from conviction, and not from weakness ; but he feared that, if he had resorted to those extreme measures, which would have rendered him formidable to the enemy, the republicans and imperialists, profiting by the embarrassments attendant upon a foreign war, would have sought to deprive him of his power at home. The catastrophe of the hundred days was constantly present in his mind, and thus continued to be fatal to France, through the consequences which it entailed.

The king was therefore often obliged to take steps and to utter words, which were at variance with his real sentiments. Nothing vexed him more than to see the journals seize upon and repeat observations which, thus dictated by circumstances, escaped him. In July 1815, the following occurrence made him very indignant against the *Journal des Débats*: his majesty was one day conversing with the Duke of Wellington, and not knowing what sort of small talk to address to one, who was by no means celebrated for the extent of his talent and acquirements, he happened to ask his grace how old he was?

“ I was born in 1768, sire,” replied the English general.

“ Bonaparte was also born in that year,” resumed the king, “ Providence owed us this compensation.”

This remark, which was one of mere compliment, should have been heard and forgotten; but Wellington, who was flattered by it, took it in good earnest and was vain enough to repeat it. It reached the ears of one of the writers for the *Journal des Débats*, who took care to record it in print. A thousand mouths immediately complimented the king on his elegant repartee. His majesty disowned it, but the accusatory journal was produced, and the king expressed his displeasure against the journalist, in terms not the most temperate. His majesty regularly read the *Constitutionnel*, from its first establishment, the *Nain Jaune* in 1814, and the old *Gazette de France*, doubtless out of gratitude for the pleasure which that publication had afforded him in his youth, as well as from his literary sympathy with M. de Jouy.

The king was distrustful of the persons about him; and he feared that they might get newspapers printed on purpose for him. On several occasions, he himself sent a servant for the journals and compared them with those which had been previously presented to him, and he always found them to correspond. Once only, during the administration of M. Decazes, it was wished to influence the royal mind against the

favourite, and a number of the *Constitutionnel* was got up in which the minister was compromised in most complete style. The king, however, discovered the artifice and was much offended at it. But we thought it an excellent trick and only regretted that it had not succeeded.

The Duchess of Angoulême arrived in Paris on the 27th of July. She was most affectionately received by the king, and the allied sovereigns hastened to present their homage to her.

There was a set of people, who at that period thought proper to assign to Madame and the Duke of Angoulême a kingdom formed from a portion of their uncle's. This perhaps is not the fittest place to enter into the details of that affair; but as I have touched upon the subject, I will make the reader acquainted with it. First of all, I must say a few words about the Jesuits, whom the king never liked. On his majesty's first return they had vainly sought to insinuate themselves into his favour; but all the contrivances to which they resorted for that object were unavailing, and Louis XVIII continued hostile to them as long as his mental energies remained unimpaired by disease.

The Jesuits had their share of the catastrophe of the hundred days; but, on the king's second return, they began to cabal with increasing success. To gain the good graces of the king,

they knew it was necessary to be useful to him, or at least to make him believe that they were so. This was no difficult matter. The good fathers could employ powerful resources for the furtherance of their object. Consequently, they were the first to acquaint the king with the plan that had been broached by certain individuals in the South, to form a kingdom of Aquitaine, of which the Duke of Angoulême was to be sovereign, until the order of nature should call him to the throne of France, after the death of his uncle and father.

One day, when I visited the king, I observed in his countenance that expression of uneasiness and anxiety, which it always wore, whenever any new cause of vexation occurred. I expressed my regret on seeing him disturbed. The king liked that any secret that preyed upon his mind, should be drawn from him as it were by force. He experienced a relief in communicating it, but as his natural disposition led him to be constantly on his guard, even with the minister in whom he reposed most confidence, he preferred opening his mind to a woman, or even to any officer of his household, who would not profit by his confidence to betray him. I therefore urged his majesty to pour his troubles into my bosom. He sought no better; and after a few moments' apparent hesitation, he said, shaking his head: "My friends are cruel friends,

my faithful subjects have a peculiar fidelity of their own. You would never imagine what a scheme is at this moment hatching by a handful of royalists of the South. They are contemplating nothing less than to break up my crown, and to present one of its finest fragments to my nephew the Duke of Angoulême."

"Sire," I exclaimed, "some one has abused your ear by an odious falsehood!"

"No, it is a melancholy truth. It is a sentimental conspiracy of a new kind, the proofs of which are but too evident."

His majesty then opened a drawer, which had been carefully locked, and selected from among several papers, the following letter which he put into my hands, and desired me to peruse

"Sire,

"An humble Frenchman, lost in the crowd, but devoted, heart and soul, to your majesty, having come to the knowledge of a guilty intrigue compromising the dignity of your crown, determines to make you acquainted with it, and also to submit to you several documents, which will prove incontestibly the truth of what he asserts.

"When, during the events of the hundred days, the Duke of Angoulême established at Toulouse the provisional government of the South, some inhabitants of that town, who had the pri-

vilege of approaching his royal highness, formed the design of prolonging a state of things so well calculated to serve their interests. Profiting by the little knowledge of men and things, evinced by the two individuals to whom his royal highness intrusted the management of affairs, they easily succeeded in misleading honest but inexperienced hearts. After several meetings, at which the number of attendants augmented in proportion as the number of dupes increased, it was agreed :

“ That, considering that the king had, in the sitting of the 16th of March, and by his subsequent proclamations, pledged himself more decidedly than ever to the maintenance of the constitutional charter ;—considering that the persons by whom his majesty was surrounded, and in whom he unjustly reposed confidence, professed anti-monarchical principles, since they had no intention to restore the old *régime* in all its purity ;—considering that the nomination of the ministers, with Prince Talleyrand and the Duke of Otranto at their head, sufficiently denoted the course of perdition which was to be adopted ;—the whole of the South, comprehending the space included between the Atlantic, Poitou, Auvergne, the Lyonnais, the Alps, the Mediterranean and the Pyrennees, should be

provisionally detached from the kingdom of France, to form a kingdom of Aquitaine. In this kingdom their royal highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Angoulême were to exercise the functions of government, until the time when their birth-right should legitimately call them to the throne of France."

"This extravagant project could only have originated with ignorant men, and provincial politicians, incapable of judging of any thing beyond their own narrow sphere, and tempted by the prospect of sharing the employments, offices and dignities of the new kingdom.

"However, the impossibility of success, the positive crime of the dismemberment of France, the open act of rebellion against the king, and the misfortunes which must have been the inevitable consequence, did not deter the contrivers of the scheme. They presumed to count on the participation of some of the most eminent persons in the kingdom; though of this they certainly could never have received the least assurance. They had made no overtures to his royal highness, who would have repelled them with horror. However, misled by blind ambition, they set to work, without even hesitating to compromise his royal highness.

"If such an idea could possibly have been

formed by any man of superior mind, he would have endeavoured to secure its success by extraordinary means, by those powerful conceptions which, when daringly executed, sometimes succeed in revolutionizing states. But here, instead of superiority of mind, there was nothing but want of capacity. In some, selfish ambition and extravagant pride, and in others the wish of escaping from the pursuit of their creditors, were the only stimulants that urged them into the perilous enterprize. They possessed no one requisite calculated to ensure success; they had not even the bold spirit which usually characterizes factious demagogues. Thus their means of execution corresponded with the conception of their plan. Instead of determining the success of their project by striking a decisive blow, they thought only of the obstacles which might be set up against them by a small number of citizens or magistrates, animated by a true spirit of fidelity; and they contented themselves with drawing up a proscription list, in which they set down the names of some of their personal enemies, and some men in office whom they wished to get out of the way because they could not gain them over. At the head of the list was Count de Remusat, prefect of the Upper Garonne; General Ramel, who was governor of the department, of which he had just taken posses-

sion in the king's name ; the Receiver-General Randon ; M. de Malaret, the Mayor of Toulouse the advocate Romiguière, a member of the chamber of representatives ; the procureur La Rigaudère, and various other individuals whose obscurity might at least have protected them against this sanguinary ostracism.

“The leaders of the business did not see the full extent of the plot in which they had engaged. Their natural carelessness led them even to abandon its execution to inferior agents, such as C.... A.... S.... D.... &c., who conceived they could not do better than lay a snare for the victims marked out. The first blow was aimed at the prefect Remusat, and the following scheme was laid to entrap him. They were to send to him two individuals the Sieurs Seg.. and Bar..., both belonging to the Verdets, those secret companies, which were organized for the interest of the royal cause, but which, through bad management, afterwards fell into such discredit. They gave the Count intimation of a meeting of federates, which was to be held at the back of the Hotel of the prefecture, in the little street du Cloître Saint-Anne, and they requested him to proceed thither in disguise, and satisfy himself of the truth of what they affirmed. On the other hand, by dint of perfidious artifices, they prevailed on some unfortunate Bonapartists,

of the lower class of people, to assemble at the place where M. de Remusat was to find them."

"But, at the same moment, a patrol of Verdets, passing as if by chance through the street, was to surround the party, and bring them all, the prefect as well as the federates, to the Place du Capitole. There an assemblage of the vilest dregs of the populace, excited to the highest pitch of fanatical enthusiasm, was to attack and assassinate the prisoners, and Count Remusat among them. His fall was to be the signal for the death of those who had been marked out for assassination, and when the town should be completely compromised by these excesses, it was hoped that it would be no difficult matter to stir up a revolt, which, spreading through the different towns of the south, where similar massacres, previously organized, were to be committed, would form the foundation of the chimerical kingdom of Aquitaine."

"Fortunately the execution of this atrocious plot was impossible; but it was nevertheless planned out. The prefect escaped with his life only through the eagerness of the assassins to strike General Ramel, who was an object of peculiar hatred to the secret companies. The history of that tragedy is too long to be related in this letter. But if your majesty will be pleased to refer to the documents connected with that

celebrated trial, you will see that all I have advanced is correct, and also with what inveterate fury the horrible crime was perpetrated."

CHAPTER XXIV.

Formation of the Kingdom of Aquitaine.—Viscount de Com-bette-Caumont.—Additional particulars respecting the conspiracy of the ultras.—Suppression of the two last companies of body guards.—The Duke of Ragusa.—The king's reply to him.—Fouché's marriage with Mademoiselle de Castellane.—Spoliation of the Museum.—Opinion of the Emperor Alexander.—M. Casimir Delavigne justly appreciated by Louis XVIII.—M. Fiévée.—Madame de Rippert.—The *Moi* of Corneille's Medea.—Colonel Labédoyère.

THE Jesuit's letter moreover contained circumstantial details of the territorial division of the kingdom of Aquitaine. The names of the old provinces, together with their limits and privileges, were to be restored. Each district was to have its estates, consisting of the three orders. The nobility were to re-assume their rights; the clergy whose favour it was wished to conciliate by granting them more than the restoration had at first given them, were to get back their titles, and all the bishoprics which had been suppressed by the constituent assembly, or by the

concordat, of 1801 were to be re-established. The monastic and collegiate orders, which had been destroyed, were to rise again out of their ruins. Every endeavour was to be made to gain over the different towns, by restoring to them all the advantages of which the revolution might have deprived them. In short, it was a revival of the old *régime* in all its purity, or a second Spain on this side of the Pyrenees.

Numerous documents corroborated the statements of the Jesuit. They bore the signatures of the chiefs and secondary agents in this mad conspiracy. These documents presented an air of truth, which struck me as well as the king, at the very first glance. His Majesty complained that my relation, M. de Bau. . . ., had given him no information respecting an affair so serious. I was ordered to write to him to demand an explanation of his silence. He returned an immediate reply, which tended to confirm still more the letter of the Jesuit. He confessed that he had known the details of the plot; but that he considered it so extravagant as to be unworthy of serious attention. Besides, the precipitate assassination of General Ramel, having defeated the ulterior projects of the conspirators, the whole plot was completely defeated, and utterly relinquished by the weak heads who had contrived it.

Another circumstance completely removed from the king's mind all doubt as to the existence of this conspiracy. It happened that M. Combette-Caumont, Counsellor of the Royal Court, who was commissioned to prepare the evidence for the trial of the assassins of Ramel, discovered, in the course of his judicial investigation, several ramifications of this same plot of the kingdom of Aquitaine. Astonished at the unexpected disclosures which escaped from many of the accused, he communicated them to Baron Pasquier, the keeper of the seals. He received for answer an order to separate this affair from the trial of Ramel's murderers, and to make it the subject of a distinct investigation. He did so; and soon a thousand proofs were collected, a host of witnesses were heard, and when M. de Caumont had brought the affair to that point at which all was ready for issuing the orders of arrest, he gave due notice to M. Pasquier.

He was then ordered to Paris and he took with him the documents of the investigation. Louis XVIII, to whom the keeper of the seals had made a report respecting this affair, wished himself to see and question M. de Caumont, who was accordingly twice admitted to the royal presence. The king personally examined all the depositions, compared them with the documents

which were in his possession, and was thus convinced, that neither his first informant nor M. de Bau had deceived him.

He was deeply afflicted at this melancholy conviction and he said to me:

“ You see what is the state of things. The liberals would dethrone me in favour of the first comer, and the royalists, imitating the example set by Ferdinand VII, would take the crown from my head and place it on my brother’s. Have I not good reason to distrust them as well as the others ?”

This unlucky affair for some time filled the king’s mind with the most chimerical fears. In the second audience which he granted to M. de Caumont, he inquired whether he thought his nephew had had any knowledge of the conspiracy. “ No, Sire,” exclaimed the magistrate emphatically. “ The traitors who hatched this guilty plot took good care that His Royal Highness should have no suspicion of it. They well know, that had they dared to whisper one word of it to the prince, he would have banished them indignantly from his presence.”

M. de Caumont received, in testimony of the king’s satisfaction, the title of Viscount. In the investigation of the Toulouse plot and also in the trial of Ramel’s murder, he had acted with remarkable courage. The assassins and their

accomplices attempted his life, which was more than once in danger; but his firmness remained unshaken. He was a faithful subject and an honest magistrate, and he suffered himself neither to be intimidated by threats, nor seduced by promises. He did his duty and went through his perilous task without compromising his noble character.

The documents connected with this affair, which were in the hands of M. Pasquier, were deposited in the archives of the chancellor's office, where they remained while Louis XVIII lived. I know not what has since become of them; but there are still many living witnesses of the fact which I have stated, and I presume they will not contradict it. If they should dare to do so, I have in my possession a certain document which they cannot disown, since it is signed by their own hands. I at first kept it by accident; but I have taken good care to preserve it since I determined to publish these Memoirs. I have inverted dates, with the view of presenting to the reader in a combined form, the details of those plots, the object of which was nothing less than the destruction of France, for the benefit of a dozen obscure individuals. Before I return to 1815, I may add that the Jesuit, who first revealed the plot, received from Louis XVIII a reward proportionate to the service he had per-

formed, but he did not obtain the advantage which his order so eagerly desired, that of gaining the ear and the confidence of his majesty. Certainly the children of Loyola had an interest in the establishment of the kingdom of Aquitaine, but, as they soon discovered that the success of the conspiracy was impossible, they hastened to denounce it, hoping thereby to gain their much wished for object. But this hope was not realised.

On the king's second return, the courtiers, who were excessively annoyed at the new appointments to the high offices of the court, succeeded in putting down what they termed a great scandal, that is to say, they obtained the disbanding of the two companies of body - guards which had been added to the four old companies and the captains of which were the Prince of Wagram and the Duke of Ragusa. Berthier died during the hundred days. His death was enveloped in a veil of mystery. If, as it was reported, he was basely murdered by some of the allied troops, the public papers of the time disguised this murder under the name of an apoplectic fit. But Marshal Marmont had accompanied his majesty to Ghent and had returned with him. The sacrifices he had made for the royal cause were a sufficient claim on the gratitude of his sovereign, yet he was deprived of

his company : by way of compensation he was made one of the four major-generals of the royal guard, which was subsequently created.

The marshal could not submit to this treatment without remonstrance. He spared no exertions in asserting his rights ; but always in vain. His appeals were opposed by the highest interest and the most powerful solicitations, which deprived the king of all free will on the subject. The marshal one day pressed his majesty to explain to him the reasons, or, at least, the pretences by which he had been deprived of a command to which he attached so much value.

“ Marshal,” said the king, “ there is a very powerful reason, and one which you must admit is quite unanswerable. None of your ancestors ever pandered to the amours of my predecessors, or revolted against the royal authority, or flattered our bad passions, or obtained from us by servility or violence large sums of money to transmit to their heirs.”

This reply was the only reparation the marshal could obtain. He resigned himself to his fate with a good grace, which brought him into great favour at the Tuileries. The Duke of Berry in particular shewed him the most marked friendship on several occasions.

Fouché's marriage with Mademoiselle de Cas-

tellane surprised every body, and particularly offended the court. The Duke of Otranto felt the necessity of forming a connexion, to help him in maintaining the power which was ready to escape from him, and which he conceived nothing could better secure than an alliance with the old noblesse. Mademoiselle de Castellane belonged to a noble family of Aix, and was connected by blood with the first nobility of France. Fouché could not have made a better choice, but we could not conceive how the temptation of a great fortune could have induced the Castellanes to consent to such a union. The Duchess of Angoulême decidedly manifested her disapproval of it.

The marriage nevertheless took place, and the king signed the contract; but the hopes which Fouché had formed on the alliance were not realized. He, at least, gratified the wishes of his heart, for he really loved Mademoiselle de Castellane, with whom he had become acquainted at Aix. The lady on her part was fascinated by the talent of the Duke of Otranto. She was only afraid of one thing, and that was that her children might be as ugly as those of Fouché's first wife, who had white silky hair like Albinos.

But public attention was soon turned to an event of much more serious and general interest,

namely, the spoliation of the Museum in contempt of the capitulation of Paris. The conduct of the allies on this occasion, was marked by bad faith and the most revolting want of delicacy. No communication was made to the French government respecting the intended act of violence and injustice : no note was exchanged. This violation of propriety and of the rights of nations only became known at the palace through the complaints which the director of the museum addressed to the king. To his majesty this was as severe a stroke as the affair of the Bridge of Jena. He was at first overwhelmed with grief and astonishment, and he then determined to write to the Emperor Alexander, to whom he had recourse in all difficult circumstances. The emperor came to the palace and gave his answer personally to the king. He was very much embarrassed, and having heard his majesty's complaints, he said :

“Sire, since you are to preserve the provinces, which it was attempted to detach from your kingdom, allow them to take from you a few pictures and statues. They allege that these objects of art belong to them and I cannot interfere in the dispute. Leave me to take care of your interests in more important matters. I will secure the great compensations which are due to you for the pillage of your museum.”

The king saw that the sovereign of Siberia was not sufficiently refined to estimate the conduct of his allies, and that though Alexander often had in his mouth the words literature and the fine arts, they were things which, in reality, he cared very little about. But the emperor was not the only person who viewed the plunder of our museum with indifference. The duke de — when conversing with me on this subject, said with admirable *sang froid*: “What a noise here is about nothing at all. One would suppose that there were neither colours, canvass, nor marble in France. If a hundred pictures are taken away, why not get two hundred new ones painted, and the same with the statues? Why should we have all this uproar about a parcel of ugly figures, almost every one of which is broken?”

I did not fail to give the duke a severe rebuff, and I took care to report what he had said to the king. “It is singular,” said his majesty, “that that family should continue to eat bread in the year of our Lord 1815.”

“Truly, Sire, one may well be astonished that they have not returned to their natural food.”

“Ah!” replied the king, “the progress of information and the force of example”

He uttered these words with such comical gravity that I could not repress a burst of laughter. His majesty liked to say droll things in a

serious way, and thus to provoke the merriment of those who heard him.

M. Casimir Delavigne's elegies entitled the *Messéniennes* afforded at this time some consolation. The king read them with attention, in spite of the extravagant praises of the anti-royalist journals. "Delavigne is a poet," said the king, "and one of the good school." However, his majesty justly criticized the lines :

" Insensibles et sourds comme ces *dieux d'airain*,
Dont ils insultent les *images* :"

He observed that the *dieux d'airain* were already *images* and that it should have been *images d'airain*.

But he was highly pleased with the two quatrains in which the poet says :—

Le deuil est aux bosquets de Gnide;
Muet, pâle, et le front baissé,
L'Amour, que la guerre intimide,
Eteint son flambeau renversé.
Des Grâces la troupe légère
L'interroge sur ses douleurs :
Il leur dit en versant des pleurs:
J'ai vu Mars outrager ma mère !

(*Troisième Messénienne*).

His majesty thought these lines superior to any thing in the *Méditations* of La Martine, whose sweet contemplative poetry, I, as a female, and,

perhaps, somewhat of a romantic critic, ventured to prefer, even in opposition to the opinion of Louis XVIII.

I was the first to present to his majesty a pamphlet which M. Fiévée published about this time. The king read it with interest. "This," said he, "is the production of a clever man."

"It is, Sire," I replied. "M. Fiévée's talent is at once lively and profound, and he can write equally well a newspaper article and a report to your ministry. His intelligence and taste are alike remarkable. Bonaparte, who knew how to appreciate men of talent chose M. Fiévée as his literary and political correspondent. He discovered the statesman under the garb of the romance writer. M. Fiévée is one of your best prefects, and according to custom he will go unrewarded."

"Is he not somewhat of a grumbler?" asked the king.

"He is, Sire: like all people who know their own value, he sees and points out the faults of others. For the rest, he is as good a royalist as you and I."

His majesty made no answer. I saw that he was prejudiced against M. Fiévée, who was afterwards injured in the king's good graces by M. Decazes, to whom talent, devoid of servility, was insupportable. The favourite adroitly

availed himself of an anecdote, which if true, would imply a singular degree of vanity, on the part of M. Fiévée. M. Decazes informed the king that some one having admired, in the presence of the author of the *Dot de Suzette*, the unostentatious manners of the King of Prussia, who was seen in the streets of Paris without guards: "Well!" said M. Fiévée, "what is there astonishing in that? Have I any guards?" (*Ai-je des gardes, moi?*) It would appear that there was something singularly self-important in the manner in which this *moi* was pronounced: at all events, M. Decazes in relating the anecdote, gave it all the emphasis of the *moi* of Corneille's Medea.

The king laughed heartily at this story; though at the same time he was thoroughly convinced that M. Fiévée possessed a thousand times the talent of the poor King of Prussia. This indeed was all that M. Fiévée could have meant; for on the score of dignity he must have been far from intending to compare himself with a king, at a time when he was not even a prefect. The fact was, M. Decazes stood in awe of M. Fiévée, and he had good reason to do so, for the latter waged furious war against him, and cut him up without mercy in his administrative correspondence.

I used sometimes to meet M. Fiévée at the house of Madame Rippert, whom I have already

mentioned as the most furious royalist that ever lived. Her head was an absolute volcano. She possessed neither reason nor moderation ; but her extravagant enthusiasm at least prevented her from committing any shameful act of weakness. She supported M. Michaud in the management of the *Quotidienne*, of which her husband was the principal proprietor ; and during the hundred days she resolutely opposed the insertion in the paper, of any thing hostile to the royal family. She alone was entitled to all the credit of this firmness and energy ; but others have reaped the fruit of it. Madame Rippert possessed many excellent qualities, and her death was deeply deplored by a numerous circle of friends.

The month of August, this year, was marked by a catastrophe most afflicting to my heart. I can scarcely bring myself to enter into the details of a tragical event, the remembrance of which still disturbs my peace. But to tell my grief may perhaps contribute to soothe it.

CHAPTER XXV.

Message from Colonel Labédoyère.—The king's displeasure.
—My interview with the unfortunate colonel.—My visit to
Prince Talleyrand and Fouché.—Proposition of the Duke
of Otranto.—M. Decazes.

THE unfortunate Colonel Labédoyère misled by excited feeling, had been the first to abandon the cause of the king for that of Napoleon, who, during the hundred days raised him to the peerage. Immediately after the emperor's fall, the colonel was actively pursued by the royal police, which he adopted no precautionary measures to avoid. Having escaped from the hands of the gendarmerie, who had seized him, he left Paris and took refuge in Auyergne with General Excelmans, who had not yet tendered his resignation. But he did not remain long in that asylum: his fatal destiny brought him back to Paris.

I thought of him often; but I confess that amidst the multitude of events that engrossed my attention, and after I had used my endeavours to get his name erased from the proscription list, I remained inactive, hoping that he had succeeded in effecting his escape. I was still under the influence of this illusive idea, when, at 5 o'clock

on the evening of the 1st of August, an officer with whom I was unacquainted, brought me a billet couched in the following terms :

“ I must speak to you. Will you remember me ? At midnight I shall be with you. Alas ! if I were alone in the world, I would not dispute my life with those who are seeking it. But my wife ! .. my children ! ” ..

The note was not signed ; but I knew the hand-writing too well to mistake it. My blood ran cold in my veins. I knew that the death of Labédoyère was vowed at the palace. No pardon was to be hoped, either for him or for Ney. An example was deemed necessary. The royalists, Fouché, and the influence of the foreign powers, urged Louis XVIII to inflexible rigour.

I should for ever have reproached myself if I had refused the interview, which Charles had solicited. My resolution, therefore, was soon taken.

“ Sir,” said I to the officer, who brought me the note, “ tell him who sent you, that at midnight he will find my garden door open. I will receive him ; I alone. Shall you accompany him ? ”

“ Yes, Madam, I would lay down my life to help my excellent friend to escape the cruel

fate that awaits him. I will not part from him until the last extremity."

"At midnight, then, you and he will be here," replied I, while my eyes overflowed with tears.

The officer left me, I passed the rest of the evening most miserably. I was expected at the palace, whither I went with a depression of spirits which did not escape the observation of the king. He asked me the cause of my dulness, which I referred to the melancholy aspect of affairs, observing that every French heart must be pained at the hostile proceedings of our pretended allies, whose exactions daily augmented, and who, not having been able to dismember France, wished to make her pay for that forced forbearance by the sacrifice of all her resources. I related to his majesty a scene which I had just witnessed in the street. Two Prussian soldiers had violently attacked and wounded a man, whose only offence was having attempted to protect his two daughters from their brutal insults.

The king, to whom all such accounts were fresh sources of torment, said in a tone of decided displeasure: "Indeed, those who were the first cause of these excesses well deserve the punishment which justice has in reserve for them."

I trembled at these words, which seemed cal-

culated to extinguish every remaining ray of the hope I had cherished in the royal clemency.

“ I know,” continued the king, “ that you have friends in the ranks of these traitors. I advise you not to attempt to intercede for them. They have already done too much mischief to France.”

These last words, in the mouth of the king, sounded like a sentence of death. I made no reply; but I did not renounce my intention of subsequently making an attempt to move the king's mercy, whatever might be the consequence.

What a miserable evening did I spend ! I seemed to have escaped from protracted torture when I stepped into my carriage. There at least I was alone. There I could suffer my thoughts to dwell without interruption on the subject which was then nearest to my heart. As soon as I reached home, I changed the dress I had worn at court for a plain dark coloured gown, and pretending to have letters to write, I dismissed my *femme-de-chambre*. I anxiously kept my eye fixed on the time-piece, and when it wanted ten minutes to twelve, I went down to the garden, by a back stair-case, and without a light. The beauty and calmness of the night formed a painful contrast to the state of my feelings. I proceeded silently to the door, to which I had directed the officer, and unlocked it.

In a minute or two it was opened; then again cautiously closed, and I found myself in the presence of the unfortunate Labédoyère. Both he and his friend were much agitated. They informed me that they had been pursued by a Prussian patrole, and that, had I not been punctual in unlocking the door, they must have been taken. Before they had done telling me this we heard the slow heavy foot of the patrole stop before the garden wall. A thrill of horror ran through my frame. I seized Labédoyère by the hand and led him away, leaving his friend as a sentinel at the door; but neither of us had power to utter a word until we heard the patrole move away. Being thus released from immediate alarm, we sat down on a bench in an alley shaded by trees:

“ Ah, Charles!” I exclaimed, “ what a meeting is this!”

“ It is a solemn one,” said he, “ my fate will shortly be decided. At least, I have enjoyed a glorious dream. Ah! if you had seen that supernatural man present himself before us!—had you heard him claim, in that tone of command so familiar to our ears, the fidelity which we had promised him, and ask calmly and firmly whether there was one among us who would kill his emperor! Who could then think of any other oaths, or resist the electric stroke? Who would

not have fallen at his feet presenting him his sword! For my part, I hesitated not a moment. I was perjured, if it be perjury in a soldier to answer the summons of his old commander."

Thus did Charles fall a victim to his mistaken enthusiasm. I deplored his error, but I dared not blame it. I respected his misfortune.

"Ill-fated man!" I exclaimed, "had Napoleon succeeded, your name would have been held up for the admiration of posterity; whilst now you are doomed to die the death of a deserter."

"Yes," said he, "I risked the glorious chance; and therefore I should suffer without complaining, since fate has decided against me. Yes—death awaits me; but I do not fear it; you I am sure know I do not. But I am not alone in the world. I am surrounded by beloved beings whose condition will be pitiable when I am taken from them. It is the thought of them that shakes my courage. It is for them that I have come to implore your aid."

My tears prevented me from replying. I seized Charles's hand and pressed it in mine. He understood that I was ready to devote myself for him.

"I do not ask you," resumed he, "to sue for my pardon, I know that cannot be obtained. All I ask of you is to procure from the new prefect of the police, M. Decazes, a passport, under

a fictitious name, to enable me to go abroad. Be assured that I regard exile as a punishment far more severe than that to which I am doomed: the one begins afresh, every day during a long series of years; whilst the other lasts scarcely a moment.—But I am a husband and a father, and the thought of my wife and children attaches me to an existence which, but for them, would be valueless to me.”

“Charles,” I exclaimed, “dear and unfortunate friend! be assured that I am as sensible to your unhappy situation as if I myself shared it; and I will make any sacrifice to preserve you for your amiable wife and your children, who, if they lose you, must deplore you as long as they live. I conjure you, since you are here, not to quit this place. I will give you a private chamber; and here you may remain for months concealed. This house is the last in which you will be suspected to have taken refuge, and when the storm blows over, we will contrive your escape from Paris.”

“No, no,” replied he, sorrowfully, “that cannot be. Besides the danger to which I should expose your family, there are other reasons which render it impossible that I can remain here. Olympe, if I may still call you by that name, do not attempt to do more than I ask of you. Procure for me the means of quitting France..

A constant fatality seems to attend all who befriend me, and I would not run the risk of involving you in my ruin. Your situation is brilliant, and I presume happy.—It is not for me to disturb your peace.”

All my entreaties were unavailing; and he sacrificed the life which might have been preserved, had he been guided by my advice. But he formed his resistance on reasons, some of which were certainly plausible. He named his wife hesitatingly, and I understood him.

“Go then,” said I after a moment’s silence, “follow the dictates of a false feeling of delicacy. To avoid a little momentary uneasiness, you will perhaps cause everlasting sorrow. But I must respect your resolution; and I say no more. To-morrow my first care will be to exert every effort to serve you.”

He threw himself at my feet, seized my hand, and as he kissed it dropped a tear, probably the only one he shed, save in the presence of his virtuous wife. He then rose hastily, rejoined his friend, and departed. I remained motionless on my seat, eagerly listening, until the dead silence was no longer broken by the sound of their footsteps. At length, the fresh morning breezes roused me from the vague and melancholy reverie in which I was plunged. I softly ascended to my chamber and went to bed lest

my attendant should suspect the fact of my having been up all night. I soon rose again for I knew that I had no time to lose : every minute might compromise the fate and the life of Labédoyère. Forgetting, then, all considerations of opinion and party, I followed the dictates of my heart and determined immediately to call on Prince Talleyrand. I used to see him often, and he shewed me great attention because he knew I enjoyed the royal favour. I had some difficulty in getting access to him ; but at length I succeeded in breaking the order of admitting none but emperors and kings ; and I reached the prince's cabinet. He opened the conversation in his usual tone of gallantry ; but I soon interrupted him, and coming directly to the fact, I asked him for the means of saving M. de Labédoyère.

“ What does it signify to you,” said he, “ whether he live or die. You had better not interfere in the business.”

“ I cannot abandon my friend, in the hour of danger,” replied I, earnestly. “ Do a good action ; help me to get M. de Labédoyère out of France.”

“ Since I advise you not to interfere in this dangerous business, you may naturally suppose that prudence induces me to follow the advice which I have given you. However,

I should be very glad if the unfortunate man could be saved. I will speak to the king in his behalf this evening. Second me, and perhaps we may be able to do something. But if we find we cannot, let us adopt the wise course; that of silence and inaction."

I could get no more out of this great politician, who was too deeply engaged with his own interests to think of those of others. I must however acknowledge that he fulfilled his promise. He spoke to his majesty, and he even did so with some degree of warmth. But, finding the king inexorable, he gave up the point.

From Prince Talleyrand's hotel I turned to the minister of the police. There I well knew that every door would fly open at the sound of my name. Fouché received me most graciously. He listened to me without exhibiting any change in his inflexible countenance, and when I ceased to speak he said :

" You do not understand Latin, Countess?"

" No," replied I, " although I am always hearing it spoken."

" Well, I will not follow the example of Sganarelle; I will tell you in French what Brennus, one of our Gallic ancestors, said to the Romans, whom he left shut up in the capital: ' Woe to the vanquished !' Your Charles de Labédoyère has a bad head, and faithful to the old

proverb, he takes care to have a good heart; but so much the worse for him. It is necessary the king should act with severity. He is lost if he does not punish some of the partizans of Bonaparte."

I felt greatly indignant on hearing this. I knew that the proscription lists, which had been drawn up by Fouché with the most arbitrary feeling, were to him only a manœuvre worthy his infamous policy.

"Ah duke!" I exclaimed, "what if you were convicted to-morrow of being their accomplice?"

"*Ma foi!*" replied Fouché, "I care very little about it. But I do not belong to that set. I offered my services to the government during the whole of the year 1814. They were rejected, I was therefore at liberty in 1815 to embrace what party I pleased, and yet without retaining any animosity I asked again, 'Do you want me?' Then I was accepted. I acted with sincerity. I prepared and brought about the return of the king. Labédoyère, on the contrary, had bound himself by oath to the monarch. He betrayed him without cause, and persisted to the last in his rebellion. Is it not so? Admit then that your question is unjust."

"I will admit any thing you please if you will consent to save this unfortunate man."

"You ask me to perform an impossibility. I

have inscribed his name in the first list. How can I therefore undo what I have done. Then your protégé is in Paris?"

I saw the perfidious object of this question, and I had presence of mind to answer instantly :

" No, he is still in Auvergne ; but he would come to Paris if he were assured of your assistance."

" I can do nothing for him ; I declare to you again, I should injure myself without serving him. You know how critical my situation is. The court attacks me bitterly and wishes to crush me. I am obliged to exert all my skill to support myself."

I thought he wished to be earnestly solicited, and I renewed my efforts. I besought him to extend a helping hand to the unhappy Labédoyère.

" Can you not be deceived ?" said I, " suppose that I asked you for a passport for an obscure individual, and that full of confidence in my sentiments towards his majesty you granted it. Accuse me of treason. Throw all the blame on me. You will be secure, and if there be any punishment to be suffered, let it fall on me."

Fouché appeared to hesitate.

" It would not be the first time," said he, " that I have favoured the escape of proscribed individuals. I know well and I confess it that it

rests with me to save the colonel or to let him perish. But I shall lose nothing by his death, and what advantage shall I gain by the preservation of his life, to compensate for the danger to which it will expose me?"

"Do you then esteem as nothing the consciousness of having deserved the blessings of an unfortunate family?"

"Madam, sentiment may do very well in a romance, in politics decision is better. Hear me: will you insure me your good offices with the king; will you undertake to inform me of all that may be said against me at the palace; to repel, in his majesty's presence, the insinuations of my enemies; to contradict their hostile statements. On these terms M. Labédoyère is saved."

The idea of making myself the advocate of Fouché filled my soul with horror. But my ardent desire to snatch Charles from his terrible fate gave me sufficient power to control my feelings.

"Would you compel me by gratitude," I replied, "to rank myself among your defenders?"

"I desire nothing better," said he with a significant smile, "and if we understand each other well, we may carry matters our own way. Direct M. de Labédoyère to take the road to Burgundy, furnished with a passport which I will give you for him. On his arrival at Dijon, he will

alight at the inn nearest the post-master's—there he will be arrested.....”

“Arrested! heavens! have you then determined on sacrificing him?”

“No; I wish to save him. He will be arrested under his assumed name; conducted to a state prison and placed in solitary confinement. He must remain there a year, and at the expiration of that time we shall succeed in obtaining his pardon. This is my ultimatum.”

“I understand you,” I replied “unable longer to repress my indignation, “you wish his life to be the pledge of my fidelity to my engagements. If I assist you in maintaining your credit he will be allowed to linger out a miserable existence in a dungeon. This is a cruel contract.”

“Why this warmth? Is not my conduct dictated by prudence? you wish me to take an interest in a man who can inspire me with none. I consent to serve him, but on conditions which may be advantageous to me. In short I can do nothing more. Think on what I propose and decide quickly.”

“Give me at least a few hours for reflexion. I will neither break nor close such a treaty before I either see Charles, or communicate these conditions to him through the medium of his friend, who is to be with me at one o'clock to know the result of my exertions.”

I left Fouché more than ever disgusted with him, and I determined, if this negotiation should not be brought to a favourable conclusion, to employ all my efforts to injure him in the king's opinion, and if possible effect his overthrow.

The officer was punctual to his appointment. I communicated to him the Duke of Otranto's proposition. Like me, he refused to determine on so delicate a point, and left me to take the advice and consult the wishes of Charles himself. For my part, I proceeded to the prefect of the police, who was destined soon to hold the reins of government.

M. Decazes, who was still a young man, pleased at first sight by the advantages with which nature had endowed him. He had a good figure and a quick and penetrating expression of countenance, which flatterers have compared to that of the eagle. His hair was of a bright black. His deportment and manners were exceedingly pleasing. To his inferiors he behaved with artfully tempered pride, and in the presence of the great, he assumed a flattering pliability of manner, the charm of which it was difficult to resist. It was however, easy to discover the *parvenu* through the grace and politeness of M. Decazes. He was adroit without real ability, and he possessed shrewdness without any depth of talent. He was entirely a superficial man. He possessed the liveliness of feeling

peculiar to natives of the South. This was evinced in his attachment to his first wife, who was the daughter of Count Muraire, whose loss he deeply lamented. For more than a year after her death, he daily paid a visit to her tomb. But in the course of time his grief was supplanted by ambition, and the events of 1814 and 1815 opened to him a new career.

M. Decazes was a liberal at heart; but at this latter period, he became a royalist from circumstances. He usually took a just view of affairs; but the fatality which seems to attend all whom the caprices of fortune separate from the crowd to mingle with the great, made him act as though he had been entirely devoid of sense. When he reached the highest office in the state, instead of endeavouring to distinguish himself by some of those acts which for ever immortalize a minister, his only object seemed to be to obtain the suffrages, the friendship, and the intimacy of the high nobility. He endeavoured, as it were, to incorporate himself with them, and, in the hope of effecting this impossibility, he neglected the great interests of the king and of France. The *roturiers* may be well convinced that whatever may be their merit, or even their fortune, the nobility, will never thoroughly adopt them. They behave well to them before

their faces, and ridicule them behind their backs. They will make use of them to advance the interest of the caste, without, however, receiving them as members of it. *Un homme nouveau* is always an intruder. He may be tolerated and endured, but he is only received under restriction, and can never be admitted to the rank of nobility. Napoleon, who did so much for us, was never thoroughly naturalized, and when the Tuileries blazed in all its glory, it was not he who received us there, but rather we who permitted him to do the honours of the palace. I am certain that the most petty nobleman of the old school felt himself more legitimately in his place in the Tuileries than the emperor, to whom he granted only the precarious right of temporarily occupying the palace.

This evident truth M. Decazes never could comprehend during the period of his prosperity. Though rebuffed by princes, and kept at a respectful distance by courtiers, he constantly returned to the charge, and was always scheming to gain his ends. The grand object of his wishes was to get free access to those saloons, which were only half opened to him, and for this he thought no sacrifice too great. Thus he was ever ready to sacrifice France to those who wished to make her what she formerly was.

With the ascendancy which he possessed over the mind of the king, he might have secured to himself a very high reputation; but he preferred occupying a precarious place in the saloons of the Montmorencys, the Rohans, the La Tremouilles, in Madame de Gontaut's, or the Princess de Beauvau's. Thus he committed fault upon fault, and let slip all the advantages of his fortunate situation. In a word, never was there a favourite who might have done more, and who did so little. The result of all his efforts was to get for his successors MM. de Villèle, Corbiere and Peyronnet, after passing through a compromising ministry. Truly this object was worth the many intrigues it cost! While in office, M. Decazes promised much, but accomplished little. This is my opinion of him generally, but I shall hereafter point out the apparent contradictions of his system, and I shall in some instances have to praise him.

CHAPTER XXVI.

My visit to M. Decazes.—Proof of Fouché's perfidy.—Arrest of Labédoyère.—His death.—My disgrace.—Letter from the king.—My return to the Tuileries.—New ministry.—M. de Bouchage.—M. de Barbé-Marbois.—M. Corvetto.—M. de Vaublanc.—Lemot the sculptor.—The statue of Henry IV.—Royal sitting.—Monsieur's speech.—Its effect upon the king.—Departure of the foreign troops.—Joy evinced by Louis XVIII.

M. DECAZES, from the first moment he approached Louis XVIII, set his mind on that which is the object of all courtiers, namely, to ingratiate himself in the favour of his master. He fully realized his most sanguine hopes. M. Decazes possessed every quality calculated to make him agreeable to the king. Besides his personal advantages, he possessed an agreeable animation both of speech and manner, which imparted peculiar interest to his conversation. He expressed himself with elegance, and he was not deficient in literary information. As soon as he discovered his majesty's predilection for Horace, he actively set to work and studied that author. His courtier instinct prompted him to consult the king about certain difficult passages, and he some-

times modestly hazarded an observation of his own. The minister now became the scholar of the king, who took pleasure in instructing him, and proving his own superiority by explaining the poet's meaning, when it escaped the penetration of his pupil.

He thus adroitly gained the affection of the monarch; and he built his credit on so firm a foundation, that it required no less an event than the assassination of a Prince of France to shake it. M. Decazes slipped his foot in the blood of the Duke of Berry. But for that assassination, which exposed him to so many cruel and unjust insinuations, M. Decazes would certainly have remained in office till the death of Louis XVIII. I may confidently make this assertion, for I was witness to his power and influence. He could make the king take a favourable or unfavourable view of any subject, and he so completely crept into his majesty's confidence, as to make him believe that he could find in him alone the devoted friendship, which he ought to have looked for only in the members of his own family and some of the faithful companions of his exile.

At the period when I was interesting myself for the unfortunate Labédoyère, M. Decazes was, as I have observed, aspiring to the favour of the monarch, though he was then very far from

having reached it. He was aware that I might be of service to him in his ambitious views. He therefore appeared delighted at seeing me, and expressed his regret that I had not requested him to wait on me at my house. He was ignorant of my real sentiments with respect to the Duke of Otranto, who he feared might supersede him in his wished-for influence with the king. He overwhelmed me with offers of service. I took him at his word, and requested him to close his eyes on the flight of Charles de Labédoyère. The warmth which I spoke rendered it impossible for him not to perceive the lively interest I felt in the fate of the unfortunate colonel. He replied that he had but little power, as it did not extend further than Paris, but that the Duke of Otranto could render me all the service I wished for in this affair.

I imprudently answered that I had seen the minister, and that I had found him disposed to second my views.

“And do you believe he will, Madam?” returned M. Decazes, in the tone of one who knows more than he chooses to tell.

“Certainly I do, Sir, I have his excellency’s word for it.”

“And I, Madam, have more than his mere word; I have a letter from him, which, I am sorry to inform you, positively contradicts the

favourable intentions upon which you found your hope."

Had he told me this, without giving me ocular proof of what he asserted, I could not, in spite of my ill opinion of Fouché, have credited such infamous perfidy. But Decazes, delighted at the opportunity of unmasking to me a rival whose success annoyed him, eagerly presented to me a letter which had been written immediately after my departure from the *Hôtel de la Police*. I opened it with a thrill of horror.

The letter stated that positive information had been received, which left no doubt of the return of Colonel Labédoyère to Paris. It was therefore deemed necessary immediately to set all the agents of the prefecture upon the watch, for the purpose, not of arresting him, but of discovering his retreat. When that should be discovered, nothing further was to be done until fresh instructions were issued.

When I had perused the letter, an exclamation of surprise and indignation escaped me; to which M. Decazes replied with a malicious smile: "Madam, you see the duke cannot play fairly. He deceives you; and perhaps he also deceives me."

"And, what is worse, he deceives the king," I answered; "but, stay a little; he shall be treated as he deserves. Surely, Sir, you will not

imitate his cruelty and perfidy? Shall I be more fortunate in my application to you? Would you lay claim to my eternal gratitude?"

"I should be too happy in having the power to oblige you, Madam, but imperious duty renders that impossible in the present instance. Nothing can induce me to lose sight of, or I should rather say betray, the king's service. However, profit by the knowledge of this order; I will confine myself strictly to its literal execution. I shall proceed to discover the retreat of M. de Labédoyère, and shall not arrest him till I receive further instructions. You are now aware of this, and probably, in the interval, you may be able to save him, and I shall not be responsible for his escape; that will rest entirely with the minister."

Though M. Decazes refused to do what I so eagerly desired, still the frankness of his answer left me no reason to complain of him. I thanked him, and took my leave fully determined to acquaint the king with the baseness of the man in whom he placed his confidence. On my return home, I found Labédoyère's faithful envoy waiting for me. Charles, as I had expected, was unwilling at any price to commit his destiny to the hands of the Duke of Otranto. To accede to his proposal, would he said, be submitting to long and painful torture, to be terminated only by certain death. He preferred hazarding

flight, and all the desperate chances that awaited him rather than trust to a man, who made treachery his sport. He thanked me for my kind offices, of which he assured me the recollection would ever remain engraven in his heart, and he begged that I would no longer compromise my own safety on his account. I shed a flood of tears while this message was delivered to me; and when Labédoyère's friend had departed, I felt as though I was left alone in the world. My grief however soon gave place to rage, and I wrote to the Duke of Otranto in terms which prudence ought to have restrained me from using. I told him that, as I could not trust to his word, I declined having any co-operation with him on any condition whatever, and that I should endeavour to let others know him as well as I knew him myself.

At 7 o'clock that evening M. de Labédoyère was arrested! It was stated in the newspapers that he had arrived in Paris on the morning of the same day. This was a falsehood circulated by the police to gain credit for activity.

As soon as I heard the fatal news I threw myself at the feet of the king. I afterwards learned that a *bon-mot* of Talleyrand's, which had been repeated that morning to his majesty, had put him out of humour. An emigrant lady accused Louis XVIII of not being a *royalist*

“ Nevertheless,” said M. de Talleyrand, “ he went to Ghent, and is ready to return thither again !”

Whatever was the cause, his majesty certainly gave me a very strange reception. With an air of coldness mingled with anger, he asked me how long I had been in league with his declared enemies. I knew at once by this question that Fouché had been beforehand with me, and I attempted to justify myself; but all my efforts were unsuccessful. The king took all I said in very ill part, and I, who had entered the palace in the hope of ruining the credit of Fouché, left it with the certainty of my own disgrace.

This was a terrible stroke for me; but its impression yielded to the anguish I felt at finding myself unable to succour my unfortunate friend. But it must not be supposed that I left any thing untried to effect my object, through the medium of those who had access to the king. Still no favourable result followed. His majesty was inflexible, and in my despair I ventured to write him a letter which the Duke de La Châtre undertook to deliver.

When my disgrace became known, my adorers at the palace suddenly disappeared from my hotel. The Prince of P. . . . , who had but lately sworn fidelity to me, now entirely neglected me. S. . . . de la R. . . . was just at this moment over-

whelmed with increasing occupations, which allowed him no leisure to visit me. The friendship of the Duke de La Châtre alone remained unchanged; and that nobleman kept up in the mind of Louis XVIII a feeling of regard for me, which subsequently rekindled with increased warmth.

I have not power to finish the sad history of Labédoyère's last days. I dared not see him again. I had almost boasted of possessing influence enough to save him, and my dreadful disappointment made me appear, in my own eyes, to have almost acted a treacherous part. I dreaded the last look of him whom I had no power to save. I fell into a sort of apathy, which for a length of time unfitted me for all the occupations of life.

My family was much afflicted, not for my grief but for my disgrace. They endeavoured to rouse my spirits, in the hope that my visits to the Tuileries, might in the course of time, be renewed. Their efforts were, strange to say, seconded by the king himself, who, in spite of our misunderstanding, still cherished a sincere attachment for me. While he feigned to be deeply offended with me, he at the same time made earnest and regular inquiries respecting the state of my health, and at length, to complete my recovery, he wrote me the following letter:

“ You have been offended with me and per-

haps are so still. I had cause to complain of you, but I can no longer complain. There have been faults on both sides. You did not consider what you would have done in my situation, and I did not enter into your feelings. What was the consequence? We separated, I hope to our mutual regret, and I am sure to the great content of persons whom you have no cause to like, and for whom I have but little regard. You asked of me a favour which I was unable to grant. Let us then throw a veil over the past, and enter into a reciprocal amnesty?

“ When will you come to me? Ah! how much I have to tell you! and what complaints you will have to make to me! I will hear them, and redress even your smallest grievances. Is not this all you can wish?

“ Adieu.”

I answered this kind note in the only way it ought to have been answered, namely, by a prompt visit. I immediately repaired to my toilet, where I must confess I adorned myself with some degree of coquettish art, and I arrived at the palace, where no one expected me, but the sovereign master. My appearance excited no little surprise among those who had calculated that my banishment from court would last for ever! The Prince of P.... was nearly taken ill at sight of me; and

the extravagant compliments he paid me were exceedingly comical. I treated him very coldly; but on the other hand I evinced unfeigned pleasure on meeting the Duke de La Châtre, to whom I expressed my gratitude for his generous conduct.

The king rose from his easy chair at my approach, and advanced a few steps to meet me, in spite of the gout, from which he was then suffering severely. His embarrassment was visible. I endeavoured to remove it, by assuming my wonted gaiety of manner. I made him laugh, and he thought no more of our quarrel; and for my part if I had not forgotten the cause of it, I thought it prudent to appear to have done so. How much are those to be pitied who have once tasted royal favour! It is a treasure, which none are willing to lose, and for the preservation of which the dearest affections of the heart are often sacrificed, without shame or regret. There are moments, when the recollections of the past excite in me a feeling of self-degradation, when I think how I have sacrificed the tenderest sentiments to retain the royal favour which rendered me an object of envy, not only to my own sex, but even to men of the highest rank.

Being now restored to my *legitimate rights*, I prepared to give the last blow to Fouché. As soon as I named him, his majesty placed his

hand on my mouth saying: "Spare yourself useless trouble, the Duke of Otranto is going to leave me. The air of France does not agree with him; he is going to Dresden. I have appointed him ambassador to the King of Saxony."

"You are sending your royal relative a sorry present, Sire: but how could you resolve to dismiss the only man who is said to be capable of directing and supporting the monarchy?"

"The time of illusion and deception is passed away. I now see Fouché's conduct in its true light. He surrounded me with terrors and imaginary plots; he paid wretched hirelings to riot beneath my windows. And for what object? To get the control of the police of the Tuileries."

"Which he did get, Sire."

"Yes," replied the king in a tone of ill humour, "because I am surrounded by a set of people who abhor the revolution, and yet have confidence only in the revolutionists. But the spirit of the late elections, and the well known sentiments of the chamber which is about to assemble, left the Duke of Otranto no hope of retaining his portfolio. He himself begged to go. He has one consolation; and that is having dragged Talleyrand with him in his fall; for all my ministers retire, except the Duke de Richelieu."

The king then told me the names of those

who were to form the cabinet. The Duke de Richelieu was to be at the head of the department of foreign affairs with the title of president. The Duke of Feltre was to be war minister; Viscount de Bouchage, minister of the marine; Count de Barbé-Marbois, minister of justice; Count Corvetto, minister of finance; Count de Vaublanc, minister of the interior, and M. Decazes, minister of the police.

I saw no reason to be dissatisfied with this selection, though there were several of the new ministers whom I then knew but slightly, and whose merits consequently, I could not adequately appreciate.

Viscount de Bouchage was considered an honest man, and nothing more. His royalism, which was his first, or rather his only recommendation, could not supply the want of those elevated views which are requisite to form a great statesman. However, it was necessary to be satisfied with him as he was.

Count de Barbé-Marbois, a magistrate who had all his life been engaged in public business, brought to the council a fund of experience, a profound knowledge of the science of legislation, a conciliatory spirit, patriarchal manners, the habit of public speaking, and, finally, the firm conviction that to reign in peace it was necessary to reign according to the charter. These prin-

ciples put him rather out of favour with those who were the advocates of a different sort of government.

M. Corvetto was an artful man. He was an adept in Italian intrigue and diplomacy. No one knew better than he how to gild his words. He could manage the funds of a state with admirable confusion, at the same time preserving an appearance of regularity and evading all importunate control. He was at once pliant and firm, patient and irritable. Napoleon, who knew how to assign to every man his right place, gave to M. Corvetto inferior appointments which he filled well : but the king forgot that the finance department, of all others, was least proper to be placed under the control of foreigners. M. de Corvetto managed the treasury in his own way, and shewed himself almost as anxious to secure immense advantages to the city of Genoa as to serve the interests of France.

The Count de Vaublanc, was a demim-royalist of the period, and one who had formerly been a member of the majority of the National Assembly. He was preceded by a high reputation, which he lost, as is often the case, on his entrance to the ministry. He was a pamphlet-writer and a sentimental politician. His head was full of plans which he never knew how to carry into execution. He was an honest man

and a tolerably eloquent orator : but the inconsistency of his measures proved his imperfect power of conception. At the Tuileries we used to be much amused at his self-conceited manner. He had so good an opinion of his own person, that he proposed to sit to Lemot, the sculptor, for the statue of Henry IV. The offer was accepted, and his excellency every day mounted the model horse in full costume to give the artist a sitting. As a reward for this service his friends hoped that he would be made a peer on the day of the inauguration of the statue, but such was not the case, and M. de Vaublanc has no seat in the chamber of deputies this year. It is said that the muses console him, without bearing him any grudge for a certain epic poem which he presented to the world.

The king read to me the speech which he was to deliver on the opening of the session. He had weighed every word of it and he expected it would produce a great effect. Our situation was critical. Armed foreigners oppressed us by their insatiable exactions. There were immense evils to be repaired, numberless wounds to be healed, and violent dissensions to be quelled. All this was not easy, and the *chambre introuvable* was far from succeeding. I was present at the royal sitting, where I saw for the first time men who, though then obscure, afterwards became

very celebrated. I shall not speak of them here: I shall merely observe that M. Laisné was made president of the chamber, and that two departments disputed the honour of returning the Duke of Otranto, who, however, had no seat in the chamber.

The princes of the royal family, with the authority of the king, took their places in the Chamber of Peers and participated in its proceedings. The Duke of Berri spoke on several occasions. He delivered himself with facility. His eloquence was simple and unlaboured and yet forcible, because he spoke from conviction. His royal highness Monsieur also spoke on the proposition of voting thanks to the Duke of Angoulême for his conduct in the South. His speech may be seen in the journals of the time. He declared that his son would have been happy to have deserved, by combating the enemies of France, the honour which the chamber proposed to him; but he could not forget that he, a Frenchman himself, had been reduced to the necessity of fighting against Frenchmen, and that he must decline thanks acquired by such claims. As to the retreat of the Spanish troops, it was not so much due to the exertions of the Duke of Angoulême, as to the excellent spirit evinced throughout the whole of the South.

“ Gentlemen, said his royal highness in con-

clusion, for these reasons I demand the order of the day. I appreciate as I ought the manner in which you have received the proposition submitted to you."

This speech produced a lively and general sensation. The king was told of it, and he said to me the next morning :

"My brother is becoming an orator; his speech will create an endless noise; nothing else will be spoken of for the next fortnight. This is all very well; but I think, in a well-governed state, the heir presumptive ought to preserve silence, for if he utter two sensible sentences, a hundred absurd and ridiculous ones will be set down to his account."

I do not know how it is, but courtiers certainly possess the art of divining all that passes in the minds of kings. Not another word was said at the palace about the speech of Monsieur, and in the following year, the king did not permit the princes to attend the Chamber of Peers.

I refrained from saying any thing more about the Duke of Otranto, and I had no desire to see him for the purpose of triumphing at his downfall. He must have set off, with the conviction that he was leaving France for ever, and that the proscription, to which he had so pitilessly condemned others, had at length visited him. All his

arts, all his dark schemes, had gained him no other advantage than two months' possession of the ministry. He then lost, without the hope of regaining it, the power which had cost him so dear.

The end of the year 1815 was marked by several acts of severity, which were, however, considered necessary. I will pass them over in silence: there are some recollections which it is not well to revive. I must however, recall the month of November, when the treaty of Paris delivered the capital and the greater part of France from the occupation of foreign troops: On that day the king was in high spirits, I observed him two or three times raise his hand to his forehead, and my eyes inquired the meaning of this repeated action.

"I replace," he said, "my crown on my head; but it will not be firmly fixed until to-morrow, when I shall have none but Frenchmen to support it. You must know," continued he lowering his voice, "that I am almost the only person who rejoices at the departure of the foreigners. It was wished to make me dread their absence; but the sight of them has been too long painful to me. There are some persons here, who would like to follow them, and who fear to stop in France after their departure. Let them go, if

they choose ; for my part I shall not imitate their example. And you, my dear Countess, are you sorry for their departure ?

“ No, Sire,” I answered earnestly ; “ our dear allies have doubtless done you service, but they have made you pay well for it. May God go with them, and preserve us from their return !”

“ Their return !” repeated the king, with vehemence, “ they shall never return. I would rather unfurl the tricoloured flag : at least I will yield to none but Frenchmen. Ah ! how distressing has been the arrogant protection of these allied sovereigns ! How deeply have I felt the outrages committed by their generals ! I shall never pass a day without recollecting that they turned their cannon against my royal residence.”

The king ceased speaking ; a tear of indignation glistened in his eye. I respected his silence and his noble sorrow.

CHAPTER XXVII.

The king's melancholy.—Illusions.—His majesty calls to mind the scenes of his youth.—Martin.—The apparition.—The Bishop of Versailles.—M. de Breteuil.—M. Decazes shaken in his scepticism.—Dr. Pinel.—The Grand Almoner.—The Arch-angel Raphael at Charenton.—Dr. Alibert.—Joan of Arc.—The key-hole.

GRIEF renders the heart susceptible of the tenderest affections : men never think women so interesting as when they are in tears. This is perhaps because they know that in our weakness we love to be consoled. How few young widows remain long faithful to their sorrow ! For my own part I must confess, that when I returned to court after the death of my husband, my grief seemed destined to be eternal. Yet it yielded to a return of that *besoin d'aimer*, which had well nigh ruined me in my giddy youth,—which had displeased a husband, from whom politics separated me,—and which disposed of my existence after the second restoration. But before I enter upon this episode of my Memoirs, I must relate a singular scene which the flattering intimacy I was honoured with by the king enabled me to witness.

Melancholy is certainly contagious. I ob-

served that Louis XVIII, after occasionally reproving me for my dulness, seemed himself to be drawn into a sort of sympathetic thoughtfulness. He, who had always esteemed a sprightly remark worth a hundred sentimental reflexions, became all at once as decidedly seized with mysticism as the Emperor Alexander himself; and my kind friends, the courtiers, did not fail to compare me to Madame Krudener. No doubt the indulgence of these feelings occasionally betrayed his majesty into expressions of kind familiarity, which offered scope for malicious interpretation. Indeed indiscreet, and exaggerated rumours gave me credit for greater influence than I really possessed. And why may I not acknowledge that there were times in which I myself indulged a moment's transient illusion. I speak frankly, and confess my most inward thoughts; but at the same time I beg to be allowed once for all to adopt the motto of the order of the garter, *Honni soit qui mal y pense*.

Like all people advanced in life, the king loved to recall in imagination the scenes and feelings of his youth, and he used to talk over the conquests of the Count de Provence. He described the past in such lively colours that he made it almost present to his hearers:—yet, king as he was, he was obliged to content himself with the pleasures of recollection.—While he was in the melancholy mood to which I have

just alluded, and which seemed to elevate him a little above the reality of life, he was induced to grant an audience to a mysterious person, who had been condemned by the police and the faculty as a madman and a visionary.

About the 15th of January, a labourer named Martin, living at Gallardon, near Charenton, while at work in the fields, was accosted by a youth of extreme beauty, who in a voice of heavenly sweetness said to him : "Martin, go to the king and tell him his government is in danger."

Martin was not disposed to obey this injunction without consulting wiser people than himself. The unknown youth repeated his command and vanished like a phantom. Martin, on his return home, went immediately to his *curé*, who referred him to the Bishop of Versailles. The bishop, who was perfectly satisfied of the truth of Martin's story, desired him to inquire the name of the mysterious person. On the 30th of January, the stranger again appeared to Martin, but he refused to tell who he was, though requested to do so in the name of monseigneur the bishop. However, on that occasion and on several subsequent days, Martin was ordered to go to court, and he was even assured that he should in the end be summoned thither. Public functionaries succeeded the *curé* and the bishop in the examination of Martin, who confidently

presented himself to M. de Breteuil, the prefect of Eure et Loire, and a descendant of the man who owed his fortune to the trick by which he destroyed the proofs of the marriage of Cardinal Dubois. The prefect was struck with his honesty of manner, and immediately sent him off to Paris. This strange ambassador was directed to the minister of the police, and he accordingly arrived under the escort of a gendarme. M. Decazes received Martin with a scepticism worthy of the successor of Fouché. He was afraid of a hoax, and of all men in the world, a minister of the police has a horror of being mystified. However, he was struck with the confidence and the inspired air of Martin, and when he spoke of him to the king, it was in the half-serious, half-jocular tone of a young, well-bred philosopher who is ready to believe any thing that is required of him. But the king, who was no friend to mystification any more than his minister, coolly directed that Martin should be placed under the care of Dr. Pinel. The poor labourer came to reveal the perils of the monarchy: this was encroaching on the business of M. Decazes, and his excellency was not sorry that Louis XVIII had refused the audience. But the grand almoner in his turn was offended with M. Decazes. In his opinion the examina-

tion of such an affair belonged exclusively to the ecclesiastical authority. The police knew nothing about supernatural apparitions, and as to physicians, they were by profession materialists who did not believe in the existence of angels because they had never dissected any.

It may truly be said that Heaven makes the petty passions of men subservient to its wise ends. The conflict of ministerial and ecclesiastical vanity directed attention to Martin, who all this time continued to see the apparition at Charenton. He said to M. Pinel: "You have come to see whether I have lost my wits; but *I have been told* that those who send you are more mad than I." M. Pinel, however, reported that Martin's disease was an *hallucination of the senses*, or an *intermitting alienation*. The poor man complained bitterly to the apparition of the difficulty into which his advice had plunged him; but the celestial envoy told him that his trials would soon be at an end, and to convince him of this, he shewed himself in all the splendour of seraphic glory. Martin could no longer doubt that he beheld an angel before him. It was Raphael in person; but visible to him alone: for two medical students, who were on the watch, perceived nothing except an air of ecstatic beatitude on the countenance of the labourer of Gallardon.

Alas! a bucket of water which was thrown over the head of the poor man suddenly interrupted his celestial vision.

Meanwhile the archangel Raphael fulfilled his prediction to his envoy. The Archbishop of Rheims insisted on his right of investigating the affair, and the little fit of royal melancholy to which I have alluded caused his majesty first to yield to a doubt and then to a little feeling of superstitious curiosity.

“What do you think of this affair?” said the king to me.

My female curiosity naturally favoured Martin.

“See him by all means, Sire,” replied I.

At that moment M. Alibert entered. Like an experienced doctor, he had, on the preceding day, been secretly questioning me respecting the king’s melancholy. M. Alibert always said, that none but ignorant physicians neglected moral medicine. He enquired even into the dreams of his royal patient, and his majesty having broached the subject of Martin, M. Alibert replied, after feeling the king’s pulse :

“Sire, I have not seen this visionary; but all I hear of him leads me to suppose that there is something very peculiar in his madness, if, indeed, he be mad.” It is said, that he is to prove his mission to your majesty, by revealing matters which are known to you alone. In that

case, Sire, you alone can judge of the imposture, or the madness of Martin."

"But, Doctor," said the king, "do you admit the possibility of an apparition?"

"Sire, I am-ready to admit any thing which may prove that your majesty and the fortunes of France are under the especial care of Heaven. Besides, a madman may sometimes give good advice. What were the court fools of former times, but madmen? yet monarchs sometimes condescended to consult them."

"But, Doctor, you are evading the question. Do you believe in apparitions?"

"Sire, I believe in people who believe in them. Faith renders any thing possible. Had Joan of Arc been incredulous, she would not have delivered France from the English."

"Certainly; but we had not then an Academy of Sciences for analysing miracles. However, I will see Martin. He will amuse us; and if I quarrel with Dr. Pinel, I shall call you to witness, Dr. Alibert, that it was by your advice, and not by that of Monseigneur de Rheims, that I granted this visionary an audience."

For fear of compromising his dignity and his reputation of a philosophic king, Louis XVIII, while he yielded to the solicitations of his grand almoner and the curiosity of a woman, took the precaution of causing Martin to be introduced to

him by M. Decazes himself. I verily believe that, in an age like this, had the archangel Raphael condescended to come to court in person, instead of sending an envoy, he would, like Martin, have been introduced by the minister of the police, in spite of all the remonstrances of the grand almoner, the Marquis de Dreux-Brézé, and the Marquis de la Live.

“ You wish to speak to the king then,” said M. Decazes to Martin. “ What have you to say to his majesty ?”

M. Decazes had asked this question on a former interview ; but Martin preserved his presence of mind now as well as before, and he told his excellency that he could only tell what he had to say in the presence of the king. M. Decazes then bit his lips, and conducted Martin to the king’s closet, where he left him. I was in my hiding-place, with my ear applied to the key-hole, all impatience and curiosity, and dreading lest any noise should make me lose a word of this curious conversation.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Martin at the palace. — His conversation with the king. — Allusion to Lavalette's escape. — Figurative language. — Prediction of the dagger. — Martin's reserve. — The Archbishop of Rheims. — Apropos conjectures.

IN the very face of the Marquis de Dreux-Brézé, Martin passed through the apartments of the Tuileries, equipped in his coarse grey coat, iron-heeled shoes, and leather gaiters. In this costume did I see him enter the king's closet, with an air of the most perfect self-possession, and betraying not the least symptom of surprise at any thing he saw. The king was seated at his table in his elbow-chair, and decorated with all the orders of royalty. Martin advanced towards him with a firm step, and bowing with his hat in his hand, said :

“ Sire, I salute you ! ”

“ Good day, Martin ; ” rejoined his majesty. On hearing himself thus addressed by name, Martin felt still more at his ease, and seemed almost to expect to be asked to take a seat. Such was the king's good nature, or perhaps, such his respect for the man, who came to him with a mission from an archangel, that he actually

desired Martin to take a chair. Martin waited not to be told a second time, and seating himself, said :

“ You understand, Sire, why I come here ? ”

“ I understand,” replied the king, “ you have something to communicate to me. What is it ? We are alone.”

I am inclined to think that his majesty entirely forgot that I was all but present at the interview ; for I cannot suppose a monarch so justly noted for his sincerity, could be guilty of a falsehood, or even the slightest mental reservation. This reflection, however, did not at the time come across my mind. I was then absorbed by anxious curiosity.

“ Sire,” said Martin, “ I am sent hither by the archangel Raphael, one of the greatest powers of Paradise : he has several times appeared to me, and has directed me to present myself to you, saying that when I should be alone with you, he would inspire me with the useful advice, which good souls in their prayers have begged for you.”

“ Well,” said the king, “ proceed.”

“ Sire, you have been betrayed, and you will be so again.”

“ What ! is my throne insecure ? Is it my person or my family that is in danger ? Have I to fear death or exile ? ”

"Death will come at the proper time," replied Martin, "but God has heard your prayers in exile: your tomb will be at St. Denis."

"True," rejoined the king, I have often expressed that wish. I have oftener prayed for the tomb than for the crown of my ancestors."

"God in his mercy has heard you. But you have not done enough for the holy religion. You have trusted to men who have betrayed you; some by their incapacity, for God was not with them; others by their wickedness, for the devil was their God. At this present moment, the negligence of those who serve you holds out encouragement to your enemies. The very prisons throw open their gates to your captives."

"You allude to Lavalette?" said the king.

"I know not his name," replied Martin.

"No matter, but who has let the prisoner escape?"

"Sire, the tardiness of the pursuit sufficiently accuses those who ought to have kept guard upon him."

"You see, Martin, women when they wish to deceive us, are more cunning than the police."

"Yes, Sire, there has been cunning enough in the affair; but beware of those who serve you. Domestic peace will not be restored to France until the year 1840. Till then conspira-

cies will menace the throne. Even now a hand is sharpening a dagger!"

The king started, and for my part I trembled, as though I had seen the dagger levelled at his breast.

"A hand," continued Martin, "is sharpening a dagger. Hasten to multiply the young shoots, for the sap is dried up in the budding branch. Misfortune has already withered one; the other must be grafted, and the old trunk may yet be adorned with leaves and fruits."

"But," said the king, comprehending at once the meaning of this figurative language, "if the angel who sent you hither, be the same who married young Tobias, and delivered his bride from the devil, may he not render all the branches of the tree fruitful?"

The language of Martin was animated, and, in his character of a prophet, he gradually acquired an ascendancy over the king, amounting almost to fascination. He seemed indeed like a master instructing his pupil. I never saw his majesty pay more earnest attention to any one conversing with him. To the last question Martin replied:

"Sire, the decree is irrevocable."

"But," resumed the king, "there is already a wife, and children of a lawful union. Must we acknowledge them?"

"Sire, you do not speak your mind fully. You cannot approve of an alliance with the enemies of France, and of the catholic religion. Follow your inspiration; for it is good. The dagger will come too late, a baptism of blood is preparing, but life shall arise out of death."

"We are getting into the Apocalypse," interrupted the king, who however, at a subsequent period, and on a sad occasion, recollected this obscure prediction.

"Sire," continued Martin, "events will enlighten you. But lose no time, the day of the dagger is fixed."

The king took Martin by the hand. "Allow me," said he, "to touch the hand which the archangel has pressed in his."

"Ah Sire, yours might likewise have been pressed by that hand of glory. I presumed to say to the archangel when he bade me come here, 'Why do you not go yourself?'"

"And what reply did he make?"

"He said he had it not in his power to do for you what you most desired at the present moment, and that it would be too much for him to refuse you any thing in person."

"Ah! I know," cried the king a little embarrassed. He lowered his voice, and the name of King David faintly articulated was all that reached the key-hole.

" But Martin," he continued in a firmer tone, " you know all?"

" I know only what I have been told," replied the other ; " but to prove to you the truth of my mission, I will tell you of a promise made but not kept by you. But there is still time . . . or the sacred oil must never anoint your head."

" Keep the secret," exclaimed the king, "it is known only to God, you, and me."

" I will be silent ; but go not to Rheims unless you promise to redeem your word, for it is written that the ceremony of your anointment shall prove fatal."

The conversation now became very interesting. I saw the king lift his eyes to heaven, and clasp his hands, while a tear dropped from his eye. Whether owing to my wearied attention, or from the smothered tone of his voice, I cannot say, but I could no longer catch any intelligible sentence. His audience with Martin closed in the manner of an ordinary conversation.

" Sire," said Martin, " I wish you good health, and I request your permission to return to my family. I was always assured that I should be neither troubled nor harmed in the execution of my mission."

" And you shall not," replied the king, " you shall return to-morrow with passports and my minister shall see that you are taken care of to-night."

“As it may please your majesty,” said Martin. Louis XVIII rang his bell. The minister was close at hand: he entered and led Martin out. They had hardly left the room when I ventured to make my appearance. M. Decazes could not be ignorant of my being an invisible confidante of all that had passed between the king and Martin. When I appeared, his majesty started and rubbed his eyes like one just roused from a dream.

“Have you heard,” said he, “all that passed?”

“All,” replied I.

“Well! you see that Martin is neither a madman nor an impostor. I know not what to think of this affair.”

“Sire,” said I, “after such a scene it is proper that you should be left to your reflections;” and I took my leave, in order to commit to paper an account of this extraordinary interview. Martin and Decazes had not yet left the royal apartments. The labourer of Gallardon had expressed a wish to see the palace. Having executed his mission, his rustic curiosity took possession of him. He was eager to see every thing; and he stared about him with an air of vacant astonishment. Judging from the attention which the minister paid him, the courtiers naturally concluded some person of consequence was disguised beneath the coarse habit of the peasant. His simplicity

was pronounced to be unaffected dignity. More marked distinction was not shewn by the Roman senators to the peasant of the Danube after his harangue. Martin was overwhelmed with invitations. But the minister of the police would not yield even to the grand almoner, and I had the honour of meeting the rustic missionary that day at the house of M. Decazes. In the course of conversation we soon had abundant proofs of Martin's discretion; for, in spite of an air of apparent candour, there was a marked reserve in his replies to questions relative to the mysterious interview. On the other hand, he was very prolix on the subject of his tribulations at Charenton. He was at a loss to comprehend how Dr. Pinel had taken him for a madman. Next day he set out for his native village, after receiving from M. Decazes a present in the name of the king.

It was now my turn to be questioned. M. Decazes tried all his little arts to induce me tell him what I knew, and what I did not know. But my skirmishes with the Dukes of Rovigo and of Otranto had initiated me into all the trickery of ministerial police. I invented a story, which afforded the king a proof of my admirable discretion.

But who found himself mystified in this affair? No other than the grand almoner himself, who

imagined that Martin had come to recommend to his majesty the re-establishment of the Jesuits. In his disappointment at the result of the interview, he insinuated that the minister of the police might have influenced the deputy of the archangel Raphael.

I was almost as much gratified by the king giving me credit for knowing his secrets as if I had really possessed them. Our friendship was now for life and death; and, in spite of some occasional clouds, I enjoyed the increasing favour of Louis XVIII to the end of his days.

The king told several individuals of the court that Martin had made revelations to him; but, as he never told what they were, conjectures were multiplied. The infidels persisted in asserting that the poor labourer was mad; the royal dignity they said had been compromised by the superstitious condescension that had granted the audience; and the old chamberlains of Bonaparte, forgetting that their master had had his *homme rouge*, indulged in seditious jeering and ridiculed our courtly credulity. The faithful, on the contrary, observing that his majesty assumed a serious air when alluding to Martin, spoke of him mysteriously. Was he a political revealer or an inspired man? The question was undecided; but among other stories, the approaching appearance of Louis XVII was talked of, and it

was confidently affirmed that the archangel Raphael had sent Martin to summon the king to restore the crown to his nephew.

After some time, events of real importance diverted the attention of the court from the idle gossip occasioned by the audience granted to Martin. As to the king, his sentimental melancholy was soon banished by a fit of the gout.

THE END.

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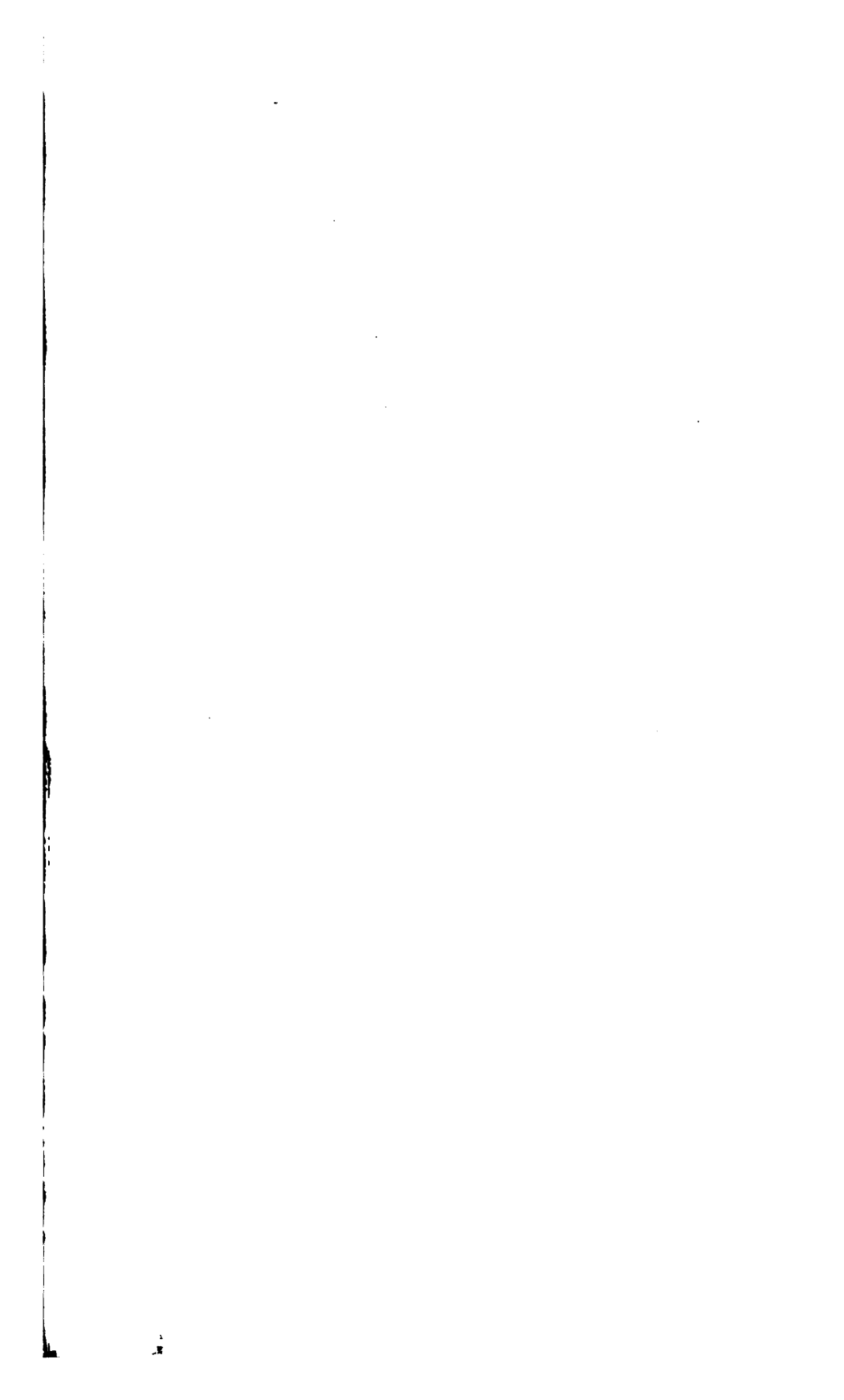
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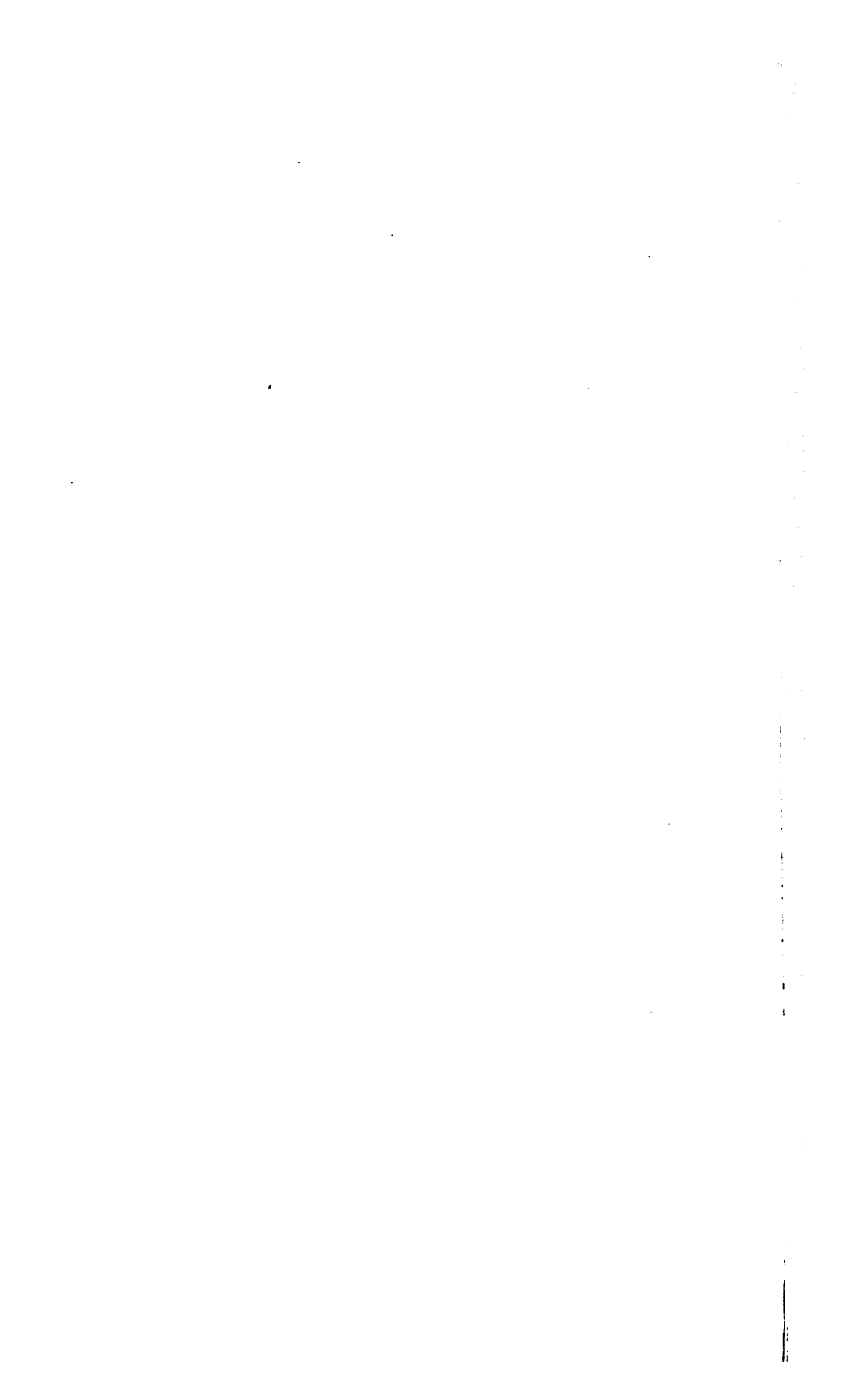
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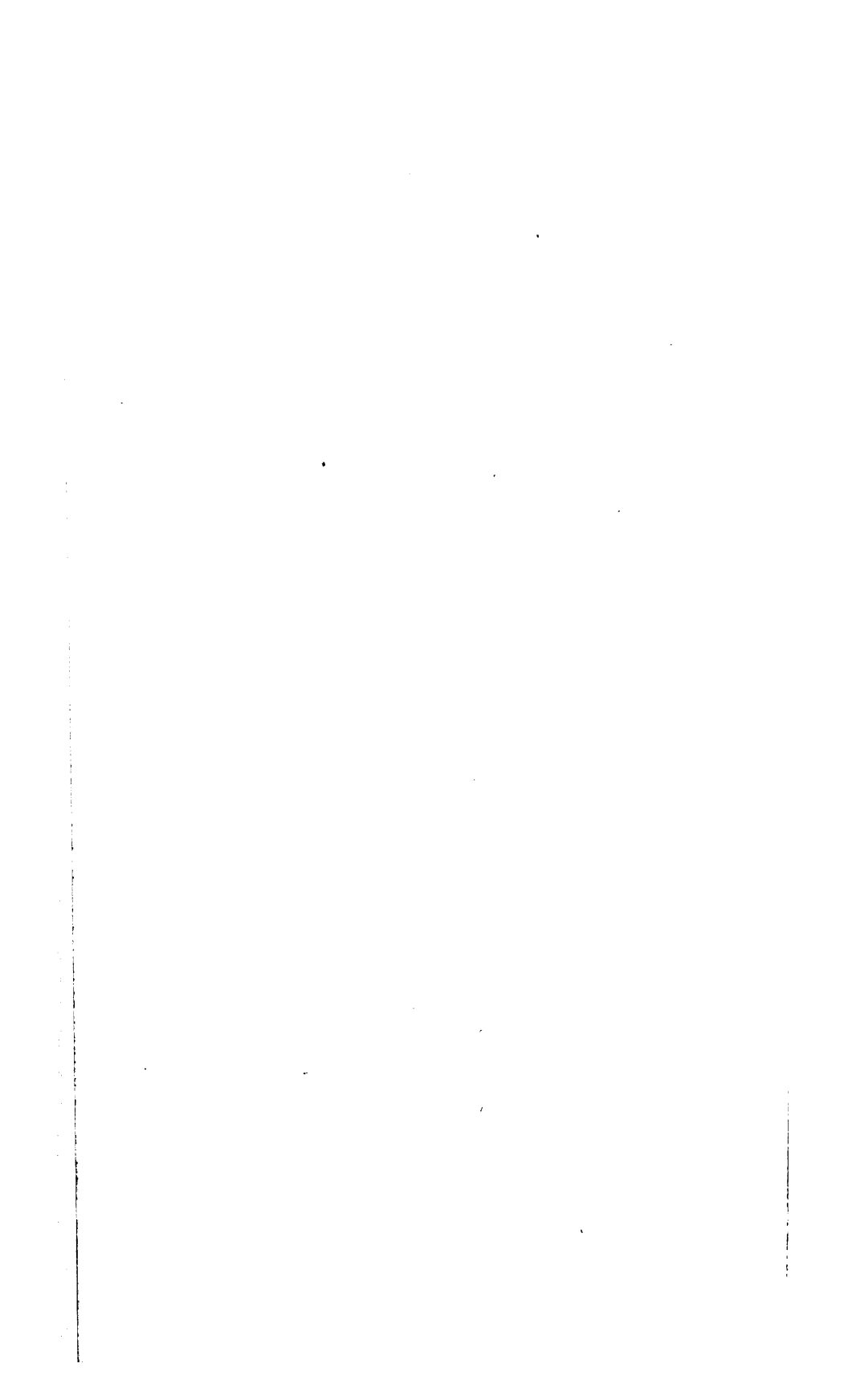
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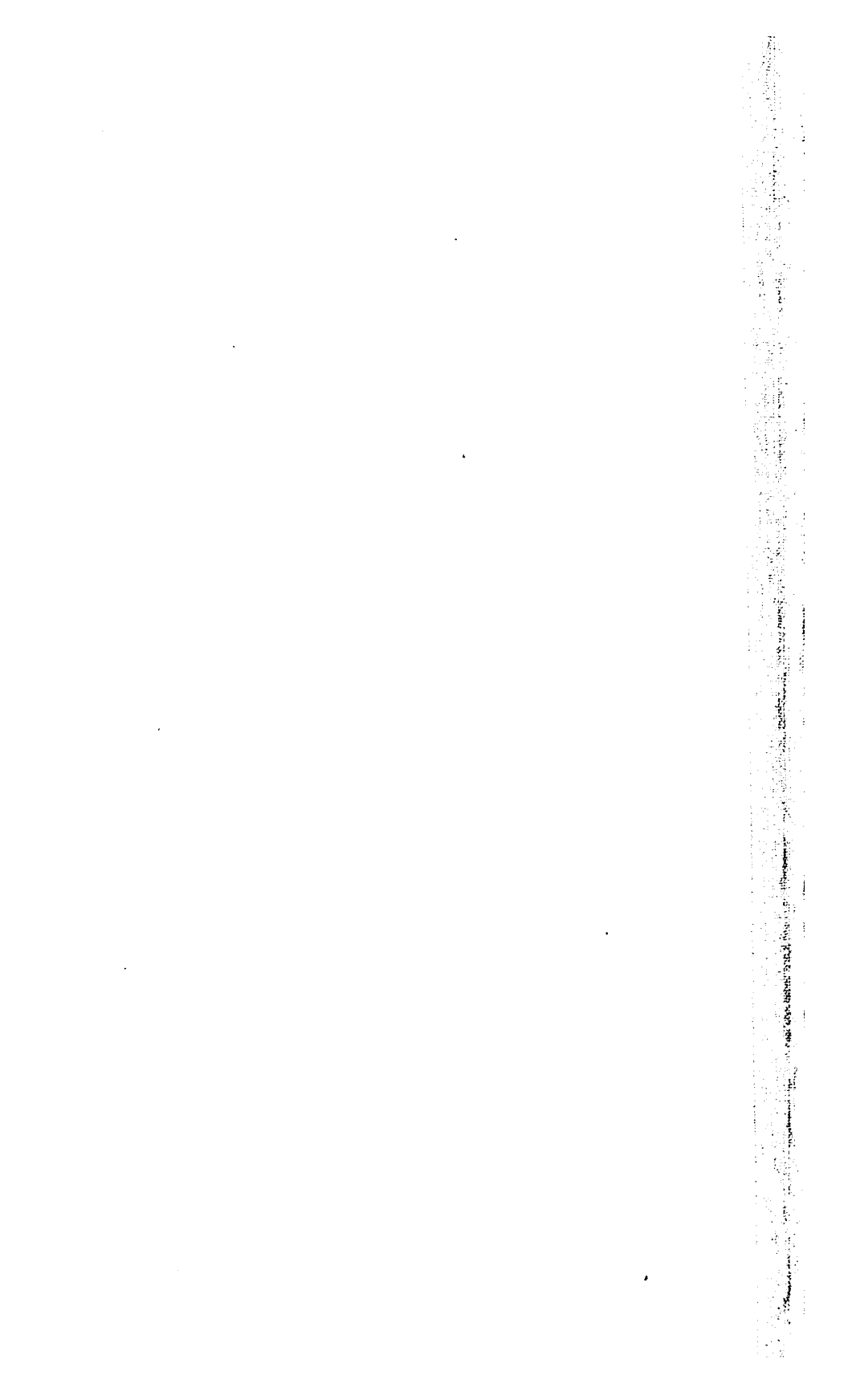
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